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THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF CHILDREN AND CHILDHOOD IN BOLOGNA,
1550-1600

VOLUME 1

A thesis submitted by
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For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX
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STATEMENT

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:.....

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines children and childhood in early modern Bologna through the lens of material culture. In particular, it considers how domestic spaces, objects and images informed the formation and expression of identities in relation to gender, social class and religion between 1550 and 1600. Although the early modern home has recently been the focus of important and ground breaking studies, little attention has been paid to how children experienced domestic life via their relationships with material culture. One of the principle aims of this thesis is to begin to bridge this gap in our knowledge through the examination of the textiles, furnishings, images and other objects that could be found in the homes of artisans, merchants, notaries and Bologna's urban nobility.

In order to recreate a robust picture of early modern homes, an interdisciplinary approach has been taken here, which considers evidence that includes physical objects, early modern conduct books, household treatises, paintings, prints and drawings. Additionally, one of the key sources for this thesis is a collection of previously unstudied and unpublished inventories of Bolognese homes and bridal trousseaux. The analysis of these documents offers a new perspective on the Bolognese domestic interior, and, considered alongside other types of evidence, suggests how children interacted with the spaces and material culture of the home. And, as this thesis argues, children's experiences and interactions with domestic material culture were critical not only in the development of identities, but also in the reproduction of social structures, religious beliefs and ideologies around gender and class.

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PREFACE

Excerpts from sixteenth-century inventories included in the footnotes and appendices use the original Italian spelling, though abbreviations have been expanded and punctuation normalised. All English translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

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Introduction

In 1582 Alessandra Carminali, the wife of the Bolognese senator and knight, Marc'Antonio Bianchetti, gave birth to a child. In the days following childbirth Alessandra was, according to Antonio Francesco Ghiselli's early seventeenth-century chronicle, "visited by all the nobility in her apartment, composed of seven or eight rooms". As Ghiselli describes, for this occasion:

One *sala* was decked in gold and silver, [while] other chambers were upholstered with tapestries, with little tables in the middle; some were covered with gold-fringed velvet, others with tapestry and others still with silk, all [of which] were crimson in colour. There was a little table covered with fabric embroidered with gold and silver, on which was a little coffer full of the most beautiful works. In another chamber was a basin with a silver ewer on a trestle of the finest white maiolica. The beds were part crimson damask and part satin with coverlets of more colours, richly trimmed with gold and silver, except that of the new mother, which was of white twill embroidered in silk of the same colour. The sheets were of the finest embroidered canvas and at the head of the bed were crucifixes, saints and other similar things, with little pots and aspergilla of silver. Beneath and behind the beds rich carpets were set on the ground; chests [were] covered with velvet; and the door hangings [were] green with the coat of arms in the centre.¹

Ghiselli's description, however embellished it may be, offers a glimpse into the home of a wealthy patrician family during a time of celebration. The detail and vivid language used to describe the textiles, furniture and other sumptuous objects indicates the centrality of material goods in creating an impressive and festive environment. Also notable about Ghiselli's account is that although this occasion marked the birth of a child, there is no mention of that child, nor any items related to its care. This thesis seeks out the children in Bolognese homes, from the palaces of wealthy families like the Bianchetti to the more humble abodes of artisans, and asks: *how were children's experiences shaped by the spaces, objects and activities that were fundamental to domestic life?*

Children are often absent in early modern written sources, like Ghiselli's account, and are frequently overlooked in modern scholarship on this period, as is discussed below; however, children were active participants in and contributors to

¹ A.F. Ghiselli, *Memorie antiche manuscritte di Bologna, raccolte et accresciute suo ai tempo presenti* (MS 770 Biblioteca Università di Bologna), vol. XVII, 447. Quoted in Lodovico Frati, *La vita privata di Bologna: dal secolo XIII al XVII* (Bologna: N. Zanichelli, 1900), 24.

social, cultural and economic life and thus are deserving of scholarly attention. The home is certainly not the only context in which children made these contributions, but it was where most spent at least the first few years of life. At home and through interactions with material culture, children learned to walk, speak and pray. This was where they learned about how and where they fit into the family, household and society more broadly; and where their identities began to take shape.

Early modern Bologna is an appropriate site in which to study children and childhood, as its citizens made concerted efforts to care for their welfare both within and outside of domestic spaces. It was the first European city to establish specialised orphanages and conservatories, which were run and supported by the members of various Bolognese confraternities.² The city also showed great consideration for young people's spiritual wellbeing. The Bolognese Bishop, and later Archbishop, Gabriele Paleotti (1522-97) promoted doctrinally correct pictures as tools in children's religious education, and advised parents to have as many devotional images throughout the home as possible.³ To ensure that children from all classes had access to these important teaching tools, the Bishop even instituted *scuole per la dottrina christiana*: catechism classes where students had the opportunity to win a print of their own.⁴

Religion was thus a guiding force in determining aspects of children's care and education; due to limitations of space, this thesis is concerned only with Christian households. For the same reason, it is also focused on a specific timeframe, 1550-1600. Over this period, it is possible to see changes to Bolognese family life, homes and domestic material culture in relation to the end of the final session of the Council of Trent in 1563, the election of Bologna's Ugo Boncompagni as Pope Gregory XIII (r. 1572-85) as well as the publication of a compilation of Paleotti's sermons in 1580 and his important text on religious images, *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane* in 1582.

The second-half of the sixteenth century was also a period when Bolognese families of all social classes were accumulating an increasing number of home furnishings, images, textiles and other items that often fall under the category of

² Nicholas Terpstra, *Abandoned Children of the Italian Renaissance: Orphan Care in Florence and Bologna* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 12; 25; 66.

³ Caroline Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana: A Painter and Her Patrons in Sixteenth-Century Bologna* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2003), 184.

⁴ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 184-185 and *ibid.*, "Lavinia Fontana and Female Life Cycle Experience in Late Sixteenth-Century Bologna," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 111-138; 121.

“decorative arts” today.⁵ These were functional objects that might support day-to-day living and the general needs of the family or children in particular, whilst others were reserved for special occasions and significant life events such as births, deaths and marriages. In addition to playing functional roles within the household, objects were also symbolic. They could signal a family’s social class, wealth or piety and indicate an individual’s gender, marital status or occupation. Objects were also repositories of memory, reminding the faithful of prayers or of family members who had passed on to the next life. As this thesis will demonstrate, children’s encounters and interactions with domestic material culture not only fulfilled their physical, emotional and spiritual needs, but also taught them where and how they fit into the complex web of family and society more broadly. Finally, the material culture of the home could be a means by which young people exercised agency and even challenged their positions within familial and social hierarchies, examples of which are found throughout this thesis.

Methodological Framework & Sources

This project takes an interdisciplinary approach, borrowing from several fields of research. Drawing on interpretive and constructivist theories from sociology and anthropology, it considers childhood as a social and cultural construction alongside and in relation to other “social objects” such as class and gender.⁶ Although childhood has biological features and determinants, such as physical immaturity, other factors such as social class, religion and gender inform the ways in which childhood is described, perceived and experienced.⁷ This kind of approach allows for the recognition, if not better understanding of children’s vast range of experiences in the past,⁸ and acknowledges that children were active and creative participants in society.⁹

⁵ Alison A. Smith, “Gender, Ownership and Domestic Space: Inventories and Family Archives in Renaissance Verona,” *Renaissance Studies* 12, no. 3 (1998): 375–91; 375.

⁶ William A. Corsaro, *The Sociology of Childhood*, 2nd ed., Sociology for a New Century (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2005), 8.

⁷ Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika Vizedom and Gabrielle Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 66–68.

⁸ Konrad Eisenbichler, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411–1785* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 4; David Herlihy, “Medieval Children,” in *Women, Family and Society in Medieval Europe: Historical Essays, 1978–1991*, ed. Anthony Molho (Providence: Berghahn, 1995), 215–43; 219. Writing on adolescents in the English context, Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos takes a similar approach, noting that various adult views “could lead to the attribution to youth not only of a variety of characteristics, but also to conflicting and wholly opposite ones” (*Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 35).

⁹ Alan Prout and Allison James, “A New Paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood? Provenance, Promise and Problems,” in *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*, ed. Allison James and Alan Prout (London; New York: Falmer Press, 1990), 7–33; 8.

Children's social contributions, agency and aspects of their everyday lives, however, can be difficult to recover from the past as their voices are often silent in written sources, such as Ghiselli's chronicle discussed above.¹⁰ Yet other kinds of evidence, such as material culture can assist with the re-visioning of children's experiences. As the archaeologist, Margarita Sánchez Romero has argued, for instance: "[t]he human lifecycle itself is given meaning through material culture".¹¹ Therefore, as evidence of the ways in which childhood was constructed, enacted and experienced during this time, I look to the material culture of the home. The spaces, objects and images that made up the early modern domestic interior supported and shaped day-to-day living and special events, but were also meaningful and purposeful in other important, though perhaps less-obvious ways. As the chapters of this thesis demonstrate, material culture was symbolic, memorial and didactic, and children's interactions with it helped them to understand, accept and sometimes challenge their place in the family, city and society. Furthermore, just as the consideration of objects and artefacts can return agency to people in the past, the consideration of people in the past can reveal the agency of objects, which facilitated, encouraged and even demanded actions, behaviours and beliefs of their users.

Although this project is focused on objects, it draws on a number of different primary sources to consider the material culture related to children and childhood within the domestic context. No single type of evidence provides a complete picture of the physical spaces of homes, the objects they contained or the ways in which inhabitants interacted with them; however, the consideration of various written, visual and physical pieces of evidence makes possible a more comprehensive vision and understanding of the domestic environment.

Objects

As just noted, objects are a key piece of evidence for this thesis. The analysis of artefacts that are today in museum and private collections, can, to some extent, reveal how they were used and for whom they were intended. Items such as swaddling bands and cradles, for instance, are clearly part of the material culture of childhood, simply by nature of their purposes. However, the examination of these kinds of objects can reveal

¹⁰ Herlihy, 215. Also see Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England, 1560-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 16

¹¹ Margarita Sánchez Romero, "Childhood and the Construction of Gender Identities through Material Culture," *Childhood in the Past* 1, no. 1 (January 1, 2009): 17–37; 21.

further information about childrearing and childhood. For instance, a silk swaddling band embroidered with crosses, discussed in chapters 2 and 3, not only suggests that some parents swaddled their children, but that this was an opportunity to display the child's membership in the religious community as well as the wealth of a family that could afford such an ornate and expensive textile.

The consideration of objects can also reveal evidence of educational practices. For instance, extant textbooks are suggestive of the methods used to teach Latin grammar and account keeping; additionally, in rare instances, these kinds of objects reveal evidence of children's agency. A Latin textbook in the Beineke Library, and discussed in chapter 5, is indicative of teaching techniques, but also suggests how children put what they learned into practice. Throughout the pages of the text are letters of the alphabet and the name of one young student is written repeatedly, hinting at his excitement and eagerness to learn. Additionally, the drawings of knights, dragons and monks also found in the book show what skills and interests a young boy might have had outside of his Latin studies and how he chose to express those interests.

Other objects in museum and library collections can be linked to children by means of their size or the materials of which they are made. For instance, there are a number of rings featuring turquoise stones in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the very small size of which suggest they were worn by or intended for children's tiny fingers, as is discussed in chapter 3. The Museum also holds a collection of very small pots and jugs, and that they are made of quite durable material suggests they were intended for small, clumsy hands, as is explored further in chapter 6.

Visual Culture

Items that were part of the visual culture of the home, including paintings, prints, drawings, sculpture and reliefs, are an important yet complex resource for this study. The examination of extant images as material objects, akin to textiles, ceramics and jewellery, can be revealing of the ways in which they were used within domestic space. The study of images' subject matter can also help us to better understand contemporary religious beliefs and rituals, collecting practices and so on. Images - their physical characteristics as well as the subjects represented - were also intended to inspire particular thoughts, behaviours and actions of observers based on their age, gender and social class, as is discussed in chapter 4.

Images can also be a valuable source for the study of other objects when considered with caution and in light of their original function. For instance, portraits were often commissioned to celebrate important achievements or moments in the life-cycle, and sitters were typically depicted in ways that aligned with ideals of beauty and gender roles. Thus, portraits must not be taken as reflections of real life; however, they often feature clothing, jewellery, weapons, furniture and other items that people actually owned and so can offer us some information on these objects and the spaces they inhabited.

In addition to portraits, other subjects set within domestic spaces can provide further information about early modern interiors, furnishings and activities. For instance, and as is discussed in Chapter 2, representations of the Birth of the Virgin became increasingly popular in this period and show activities and objects involved in the care of the mother and new-born. While these scenes often include fanciful elements and, like portraits, do not necessarily mirror reality, they needed to be relatable to contemporary viewers and often include objects, textiles and furnishings that are very similar to objects in museum collections, described in domestic inventories and discussed in contemporary household treatises.

Sixteenth-Century Conduct Books and Household Treatises

In addition to physical objects and images, this thesis also draws on sixteenth-century conduct books and household treatises. These texts were inexpensive, extremely popular and covered a vast range of subjects,¹² though most important here are those concerning family life and childrearing. For instance, Silvio Antoniano's *Tre libri dell'educazione christiana dei figliuoli* (1584) and Giovanni Leonardi's *Institutione di una famiglia christiana* (1591) offered advice on governing a family and raising children. Other works, such as Ludovico Dolce's *Dialogo della institutione delle donne* (1545) and Alessandro Piccolomini's *Institutione di tutta la vita de l'huomo nato nobile* (1552) are valuable in that they address the rearing and education of female and male children respectively.¹³ As with images, these texts were not objective descriptions of

¹² Kevin M. Stevens, "Vincenzo Girardone and the Popular Press in Counter-Reformation Milan: A Case Study (1570)," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 26, no. 3 (October 1, 1995): 639–59; Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writers, and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 110; and Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 112-18.

¹³ Dolce's text, *Dialogo della institutione delle donne* (Venice, 1545), is a translation and reworking of Juan Luis Vives' *De institutione feminae Christianae* (1524) dedicated to Queen Catherine of Aragon. See

family life and childrearing practices; many authors of these kinds of works were churchmen or moralists with their own motives and biases. Nevertheless, there is evidence, as is discussed in the chapters throughout this thesis, that parents did employ some of the advice offered (or perhaps that the advice described practices already common), which often involved objects and images found in the home.

Works by Antoniano, Leonardi, Dolce and others have been well-studied by scholars of family and domestic life in early modern Italy and these authors were writing in cities such as Venice and Florence.¹⁴ There are, however, also works that were written in and for the residents of Bologna that have not been considered by modern scholars. For instance, a section within a Bolognese catechism manual is addressed to the young reader and offers advice on religious conduct and general comportment while at home and out in society.¹⁵ Likewise, a small booklet printed in 1576 describes the specific prayers that Bolognese families should recite, and the days and times at which they were to do so.¹⁶ Whilst these works, too, are prescriptive rather than descriptive, they present what were seen to be achievable devotional and everyday practices for children and families. Pairing advice with extant objects and other types of evidence, such as household inventories, can help us to understand if or how this advice may have been put into practice in Bologna.

Household Inventories

Another key body of evidence upon which this thesis is based, is a sample of 125 inventories from the familial and notarial archives housed at Bologna's Archivio di Stato. Dated between 1550 and 1600, these documents offer lists of the moveable goods found within homes, workshops and bridal trousseaux belonging to families and individuals from the artisan, professional and patrician classes. Inventories, however, like other sources, are not without their issues. As scholars have noted, these documents were typically drawn up in relation to major life events such as marriage, death or financial disputes, offering a view of upheaval and perhaps chaos rather than everyday

Marta Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars of Domestic Virtues in the Literary and Material Culture of the Italian Renaissance" (Doctoral Thesis, Warburg Institute, 2004), 187-91.

¹⁴ For instance see, Daniela Frigo, *Il padre di famiglia: governo della casa e governo civile nella tradizione dell' "economica" tra Cinque e Seicento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1985).

¹⁵ *Psalterio per putti principianti con la dottrina christiana aggiunta* (Bologna, 1575).

¹⁶ *Instituto della oratione commune da farsi ogni sera in ciascuna casa con tutti la famiglia* (Bologna, 1576).

life.¹⁷ In the Bolognese context, the sense of chaos is intensified, at least for modern readers, because most household inventories are simply long lists of objects with no reference to where they belonged or where they were at the time the document was drawn up. Out of those considered here, only six household inventories provide clear headings for the different spaces that made up the various spaces of the home, as is discussed in chapter 1.

Despite these difficulties, inventories of the goods that families had in their homes are valuable in providing a sense of the vast array of domestic objects, images, furnishing and textiles available in early modern Bologna. Furthermore, because they pertain not only to the wealthy and elite, but shopkeepers and artisans as well, inventories can offer a view of the range of domestic environments that children and families inhabited.

Together, the consideration of artefacts, images, texts and archival documents assist with the re-visioning of now lost Bolognese domestic interiors. These sources also offer evidence of how the inhabitants of a home interacted with each other, spaces and objects to care for children's physical, spiritual and educational needs. At the same time, various types of evidence help to reveal the agency and communicative nature of material culture: it encouraged particular beliefs and behaviours; signalled and taught children their place in the hierarchies of the household, family and city; and, finally, contributed to the formation of their identities.

Identity and social class in early modern Bologna

“Identity” appears frequently throughout this thesis and it is necessary to briefly explain how this term is being used. Our identities, as individuals or more collectively, are based on a number of qualities such as place of birth, languages spoken, gender, age, religion and many others. Many of these same factors also shaped identities in the past; however, ideas about age, gender, religion and so on shift over time and place. A fundamental component of identity in the early modern period, and that was viewed differently than today, was social class. In sixteenth-century Bologna, there were several social classes in the city: the patriciate, professionals, artisans and the poor. This

¹⁷ See, for instance, Giorgio Riello, “Things Seen and Unseen: The Material Culture of Early Modern Inventories and Their Representation of Domestic Interiors,” in Paula Findlen, ed., *Early Modern Things: Objects and their Histories, 1500-1800* (Basingstoke: Routledge, 2013), 125-150; and Smith, “Gender, Ownership and Domestic Space”, 375-91.

section provides a brief overview of these classes, as they were key to the identity of Bologna and its inhabitants and had implications for the ways that people thought about, raised and educated their children.

During the period under consideration here, Bologna was part of the Papal States and thus a city without a single ruling family or a court. Instead, it was jointly-governed by the Papal Legate and the *Reggimento*, or senate. The men who were appointed as senators were from Bologna's patriciate, such as the Bianchetti discussed above and other families we will encounter in later chapters. This was the social class from which most doctors as well as men who took on important roles in the church came, such as Ugo Boncampagni and Gabriele Paleotti, elected as Pope Gregory XIII and the Bishop and Archbishop of Bologna, respectively.

Women of this social class, though much less visible than their male counterparts, could also play somewhat public roles in the city. Paleotti recruited married noblewomen to teach girls that attended the city's Schools of Christian Doctrine, and they also featured in Bolognese lauds of female beauty and virtue.¹⁸ That being said, many young women from patrician families were removed entirely from public life when they made professions of faith at convents in Bologna and further afield. This was seen as a viable option for patrician families, which could often only manage to pay for one daughter to marry due to the dramatic increase in the cost of dowries over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁹

The increase in the number of senatorial seats from sixteen to forty in 1506 was intended to prevent the rise of a single family to power in the city; however, there was a definite hierarchy within the patriciate.²⁰ For instance, men could bolster the standing of their families by being knighted, holding public or religious offices and other achievements. Wealth could also impact a family's social standing; spending money to build and decorate palaces, dower daughters and celebrate the birth of heirs, for

¹⁸ Mariam Turrini, "'Riformare al mondo a vera vita christiana,' le scuole de catechismo dell'Italia del Cinquecento," *Annali dell'istituto storico-italico-germanico in Trento* 8 (1982): 409–89; 447 and Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 87.

¹⁹ Mauro Carboni, *Le doti della "povertà": famiglia, risparmio, previdenza: il Monte del Matrimonio di Bologna (1583-1796)* (Bologna: Il mulino, 1999) and *ibid.*, "The Economics of Marriage: Dotal Strategies in Bologna in the Age of Catholic Reform," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 39, no. 2 (2008): 371–87.

²⁰ For the ways that hierarchy within the upper-classes impacted Venetian youths, see Stanley Chojnacki, "Measuring Adulthood: Adolescence and Gender in Renaissance Venice," *Journal of Family History* 17, no. 4 (October 1, 1992): 371–395.

example, was key to conveying, maintaining and augmenting a family's position within the hierarchy of the elite.

Those on the next rung of the social ladder also spent money to build and decorate their homes, celebrate the birth of children and other important life events. Indeed, one of the primary reasons that sumptuary laws, which regulated the consumption of luxury goods, were deemed necessary in this period was to ensure that differences between social classes remained clear and visible.²¹ Notaries, money-lenders and wool and silk merchants, for instance, could amass wealth and prestige but held a social position below that of patrician counts, doctors and knights. Women of this class did not usually work outside of the home and often married or entered a convent. As in patrician families, a bride's dowry could signal wealth and prestige, but could also strain economic resources, as we will see with the daughters of the notary Alberto Zanolini in chapter 5.

Below the professional class was that of artisans and shopkeepers, which had its own hierarchy. For example, although painters, sculptors and architects could achieve great renown in Bologna, they did not necessarily have a high social position as they did in other cities in this period. The painters' guild only formed in 1569 and was shared with the cotton workers until 1599.²² In addition to a hierarchy within this social class according to guilds, there were also differences within professions, as men could hold positions of power within their guild, or as masters versus journeymen and so on.²³ Women from this social class, though they could not join guilds, might work as weavers, spinners or even painters to help support their families.²⁴ They were less likely to become nuns than those from the upper classes, as convents required a dowry that was more than many artisan families could afford.²⁵

²¹ Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba Medievale: vesti e società dal 13 al 16 secolo* (Bologna: Il mulino, 1999), 11.

²² Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 7.

²³ On this see Sandra Cavallo, "Bachelorhood and Masculinity in Renaissance and Early Modern Italy," *European History Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (July 1, 2008): 375–97 and Paula Hohti, "Domestic Space and Identity: Artisans, Shopkeepers and Traders in Sixteenth-Century Siena," *Urban History* 37, no. 03 (December 2010): 372–85.

²⁴ See Luisa Ciammitti's work on orphaned girls as weavers and embroideresses: "Fanciulle, monache, madri. Povertà femminile e previdenza in Bologna nei secoli XVI-XVII," in *Arte e pietà: i patrimoni culturali delle opere pie* (Bologna: Istituto per i beni culturali della regione Emilia-Romagna, 1980), 461–99. Also see Murphy's work on Lavinia Fontana and Adelina Modesti's *Elisabetta Sirani: una virtuosa del Seicento bolognese* (Bologna: Compositori, 2004). Also see Judith C. Brown, "A Woman's Place Was in the Home: Women's Work in Renaissance Tuscany," in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers, *Women in Culture and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 206–24.

²⁵ Carboni, "Economics", 376.

Finally, came unskilled workers and the poor. Unfortunately, because little material or written evidence remains today about people from this social order, we know little about their everyday lives. For this reason, they do not figure in this study; however, as is discussed below, studies of charities and foundling homes do shed light on some of the experiences of the destitute people, including children, of early modern Bologna.

Historiography

As noted above, this is an interdisciplinary study. It draws on a range of primary sources, but has also been inspired by and contributes to several fields of study including the history of childhood, the domestic interior and the social and cultural history of Bologna. This section highlights key secondary sources from within these fields and explains how this thesis both relates to and departs from them.

Children and young people have been the focus of recent studies of the social and cultural history of Bologna, especially those examining early modern crime. For instance, Carol Lansing and Ottavia Niccoli have both used records from Bolognese court proceedings to study crimes committed by and against young women and men, respectively.²⁶ As both scholars show, age, gender and social class were determining factors in the type and purposes of crimes committed. These themes are also apparent in Nicolas Terpstra's research on the development and evolution of Bolognese orphanages and conservatories.²⁷ As was noted above, Bologna was one of the first European cities to develop specialised institutions for orphaned children, to which they were assigned based on gender and social class.²⁸

If these institutions tried, to some degree, to create a homely environment and experience for orphaned boys and girls,²⁹ this thesis offers one of the first studies of

²⁶ Carol Lansing, "Girls in Trouble in Late Medieval Bologna," in *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society, 1150-1650*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2002), 297-305; and Ottavia Niccoli, "Rituals of Youth: Love, Play, and Violence in Tridentine Bologna," in *Premodern Teenager*, 75-94; and *ibid.*, *Il seme della violenza: putti, fanciulli e mammoli nell'Italia tra Cinque e Seicento* (Rome: Laterza, 1995).

²⁷ Nicholas Terpstra, *Abandoned Children of the Italian Renaissance: Orphan Care in Florence and Bologna* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005). Also see *ibid.*, "In Loco Parentis: Confraternities and Abandoned Children in Florence and Bologna," in *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Nicholas Terpstra (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 114-31.

²⁸ Terpstra, *Abandoned Children*, 12; 25; 66

²⁹ This was especially the case in smaller institutions. See Terpstra, *Abandoned Children*, 155.

Bolognese children in the context of the family home. As such, it adds another dimension to our understanding of early modern children and childhood, but also contributes to studies of the Bolognese domestic interior. This is especially important as there has been much less research on the spaces and objects related to family and domestic life in Bologna compared with other cities. Instead, studies of early modern Bolognese homes have tended to focus on architectural history. Work by Giancarlo Roversi, Giampiero Cuppini and Anna Maria Matteucci, for instance, provide rich histories of the palaces and villas built by the wealthy and powerful Bolognese over the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.³⁰ Complementing these more general works, scholars have also examined architectural projects by specific families, especially the Bentivoglio, discussed in Chapter 1.³¹ This research is critical to understanding building trends in the city during the early modern period, as well as developing knowledge around the families, architects and craftsmen involved in the building process. Consequently, these studies have helped to illuminate the structures in which some of the patrician families considered in this thesis lived. As their focus is on architecture and architectonic features, however, architectural histories do not consider the objects that were situated in Bolognese palazzi. Indeed, the examination of domestic material culture has not been taken up by scholars of Bologna with the same vigour as those working on cities such as Florence, Venice and Rome.

This is not to say, however, that there are no studies of the Bolognese domestic interior. Catherine Fletcher, for instance, has examined the urban and rural homes of the patrician Casali family by means of household inventories and other archival documents. Looking at the shift of both people and objects between homes over seasons and years, Fletcher demonstrates the dynamism of the domestic interior, that it was a flexible space that could accommodate the changing needs of the family.³² Caroline

³⁰ Giampiero Cuppini and Anna Maria Matteucci, *Ville del bolognese* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1969); Giampiero Cuppini, *I palazzi senatorii a Bologna: architettura come immagine del potere* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1974); Giancarlo Roversi, *Residenze senatorie bolognesi: schede storiche* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1974); *ibid.*, *Palazzi e case nobili del '500 a Bologna: la storia, le famiglie, le opere d'arte* (Bologna: Grafis, 1986).

³¹ For instance see Armando Antonelli and Marco Poli, *Il palazzo dei Bentivoglio: nelle fonti del tempo* (Venezia: Marsilio, 2006); Georgia Clarke, "Magnificence and the City: Giovanni II Bentivoglio and Architecture in Fifteenth-Century Bologna," *Renaissance Studies* 13, no. 4 (December 1, 1999): 397–411; Carolyn James, "The Palazzo Bentivoglio in 1487," *Mitteilungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 41, no. 1/2 (1997): 188–96; and William E. Wallace, "The Bentivoglio Palace Lost and Reconstructed," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 10, no. 3 (1979): 97–114.

³² Catherine Fletcher, "'Uno palazo bellissimo': Town and Country Living in Renaissance Bologna," in *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700*, ed. Erin J. Campbell, Stephanie R. Miller, and Elizabeth Carroll Consavari (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), 19–32.

Murphy has also drawn on inventories, contracts and other documents to locate works by the Bolognese painter Lavinia Fontana (1552-1614) in households throughout the city.³³ Although a valuable contribution to our understanding of some of the items that composed the Bolognese interior, Murphy's intent is to build a clearer picture of Fontana's patronage network and to locate her body of work in the context of Post-Tridentine Bologna. Also working on a female Bolognese artist, Adelina Modesti has recently studied the home of Elisabetta Sirani (1638-65) and her family. Similar to Murphy, Modesti has used evidence from the Sirani household to uncover aspects of artistic practice and patronage.³⁴ From the same edited volume, and also set in the seventeenth century, Erin Campbell's essay on Bolognese interiors looks specifically at how art was used to attend to the needs of various family members and could shape social processes within the home.³⁵

These studies are all valuable in helping us to understand artistic patronage and practices as well as the role of images within the Bolognese home; my project builds and expands on this research by considering paintings alongside and in relation to a wider variety of objects from an earlier period, which also played important roles within the domestic interior and with respect to childrearing and education.

Although children figure in the families considered by Fletcher and Campbell, they are not the focus of either study. Scholars working on other cities, though, have considered early modern children's relationships with material culture. Stephanie Miller has considered how the material culture of the Florentine home reveals evidence of how parents perceived and treated their offspring, though her focus is on male children.³⁶ Looking at both boys and girls, and more broadly in terms of time and geography, several essays in Sandra Cavallo and Silvia Evangelisti's *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family: In the Early Modern Era* (2010) demonstrate that material and visual culture played a key role in shaping both adult and children's experiences. Most notable are Marta Ajmar-Wollheim's chapter, which emphasises the importance of

³³ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*. Also see her "Lavinia", 111–38 and "'In Praise of the Ladies of Bologna': The Image and Identity of the Sixteenth-Century Bolognese Female Patriciate," *Renaissance Studies* 13, no. 4 (1999): 440–54.

³⁴ Adelina Modesti, "'A casa con i Sirani': A Successful Family Business and Household in Early Modern Bologna," in *Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior*, 47–64.

³⁵ Erin J. Campbell, "Art and Family Viewers in the Seventeenth-Century Bolognese Domestic Interior," in *Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior*, 107–23.

³⁶ Stephanie R. Miller, "Parenting in the Palazzo: Images and Artifacts of Children in the Italian Renaissance Home," in *Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior*, 67–88. One of the primary purposes of this essay is to establish the beginning of greater emotional attachment to children, especially in comparison with the medieval period.

artefacts and images in childrearing, socialisation, and the construction of gendered identities,³⁷ and that on the role of material culture in children's religious education by Silvia Evangelisti.³⁸ Both scholars have also carried out valuable studies on similar issues specific to the Italian context, especially in relation to gender and religion, respectively.³⁹ Christopher Fulton and Arnold Coonin have also examined the construction of gender in relation to material culture, though specific to fifteenth-century Florentine boys and young men. Considering painted and sculpted representations of exemplary, youthful male figures from the Bible and Old Testament, both scholars argue that by reflecting on the images and identifying themselves with the figures depicted, youths would be encouraged to engage in the submissive behaviours their parents desired to ensure and protect the honour of the family and Florentine Republic.⁴⁰ These kinds of studies are valuable in that they examine children and young people's interactions with specific types or groups of objects, often paintings or sculpture, as a means of understanding how they shaped certain aspects of identity, experience or education.

The chapters of this thesis are divided by types of objects or purposes that objects served with respect to caring for children in the Bolognese home and so complements work by Ajmar-Wollheim, Evangelisti, Fulton and Coonin, but also expands upon it by considering a range of objects and, wherever possible, how they were related to each other. The broad, though certainly not exhaustive scope of the material goods of the early modern home thus aligns with the work of scholars such as Renata Ago, Jacqueline Marie Musacchio and Patricia Fortini Brown as well as the exhibition catalogues *At Home in Renaissance Italy* and *Art and Love*.⁴¹ These studies take objects, images, furniture, jewellery and many other goods as evidence for activities, rituals and beliefs around important aspects of early modern domestic life,

³⁷ Marta Ajmar-Wollheim, "Geography and the Environment," in *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family. Vol. 3: In the Early Modern Age*, ed. Sandra Cavallo and Silvia Evangelisti (Oxford: Berg, 2010), 69–94.

³⁸ Silvia Evangelisti, "Faith and Religion," in *Cultural History of Childhood*, 153–70.

³⁹ Marta Ajmar, "Toys for Girls: Objects, Women and Memory in the Renaissance Household," in *Material Memories*, ed. Marius Kwint, Christopher Breward, and Jeremy Aynsley (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 75–90 and Silvia Evangelisti, "Learning from Home: Discourses on Education and Domestic Visual Culture in Early Modern Italy," *History* 98, no. 333 (2013): 663–79.

⁴⁰ Christopher Fulton, "The Boy Stripped Bare by His Elders: Art and Adolescence in Renaissance Florence," *Art Journal* 56, no. 2 (1997): 31–40 and Arnold Victor Coonin, "Portrait Busts of Children in Quattrocento Florence," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 30 (1995): 61–71.

⁴¹ Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis, eds., *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London: V&A Publications, 2006) and Andrea Bayer, ed., *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008).

especially, though not limited to marriage and childbirth. Because they focus on the household and family, children and the ways in which material culture was employed in their care are naturally considered in these studies; however, they are not the focus, as in the work by Fletcher and Campbell discussed above. Instead, there is more emphasis on how adults perceived children and acquired and employed domestic objects in their care and education. This thesis also considers how adults perceived children and childrearing, but brings to light examples of children and young people's agency in their interactions with the goods in their domestic environments as well.

Studies of the domestic interior also tend to focus on the *palazzi* of the noble and wealthy. This is the socio-economic level for which most of the domestic goods we have today were created and for which there is much more documentary evidence. This allows scholars to paint a clearer picture of privileged households, families and the ways they engaged with material culture than for the lower classes. This thesis too draws heavily on examples from Bologna's elite families, but it also considers evidence regarding the households and goods of artisans in an attempt to compare and contrast practices and experiences in the homes belonging to families of different social and economic levels. Therefore, I have also looked to studies of artisan households beyond Bologna. Sandra Cavallo has considered early modern artisan households in her work on masculinity,⁴² and Paula Hohti has studied the homes of artisans and shopkeepers in Siena in relation to identity and sociability.⁴³ Because this thesis is centred on Bologna, it offers a point of comparison against the Sienese and Genovese contexts, but also points to archival materials for those wishing to delve deeper into the homes of Bolognese artisans.⁴⁴

As this section has demonstrated, and as has been discussed above, this is an interdisciplinary study that builds upon and contributes to a number of different fields. It offers a new perspective on children and childhood in early modern Bologna that complements existing research. At the same time, it also presents a survey of the many and varied spaces, objects and images that composed the Bolognese home, and not just

⁴² Cavallo, "Artisan's *casa*", 66-75; *ibid.*, *Artisans of the Body in Early Modern Italy: Identities, Families and Masculinities* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); and *ibid.*, "Bachelorhood", 375-97.

⁴³ Paula Hohti, "'Conspicuous' Consumption and popular consumers: Material Culture and Social Status in Sixteenth-Century Siena," *Renaissance Studies*, volume 24, issue 5 (2010): 654-670 and *ibid.*, "Domestic Space", 372-85.

⁴⁴ Although Modesti's essay, "'A casa'", and Marta Cacho Casal's "Bologna alla stanza o in casa mia: Mobility and Shared Space in the Circle of Francesco Albani," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 19, n. 1 (2016): 41-62, peer into seventeenth-century Bolognese artists' homes, their focus is on painterly production, practices and spaces and also are based on time periods outside of the scope of this thesis.

in relation to wealthy and noble families, but those of more humble backgrounds as well. This not only helps to add further dimension to our understanding of early modern childhood and home in general, but also to the social and cultural history of Bologna.

Thesis Structure

As has been noted, my thesis offers a broad view of the array of goods that could be found in the early modern Bolognese home and explores how these were used by and in the care of children. To present these items and interactions in a way that is clear and accessible, this thesis is divided into six chapters, each focusing on a different need or intended use for objects. This is not to suggest that objects were used in isolation, and correlations between artefacts, groups of objects and the various ways in which they were used are highlighted wherever possible.

The first chapter provides a broad overview of the various kinds of domestic environments, and the factors that shaped them, that could be found in Bologna during the second-half of the sixteenth century. A family's social class and wealth not only determined the size of their home, but also the ways in which spaces were used, accessed and inhabited. Social class also determined the kinds of objects a family might possess as well as where and how they might be stored and displayed within the home during everyday life but also for special events and visits. The first chapter outlines some of the differences between the homes of artisans, notaries, merchants and patricians and demonstrates how these differences shaped children's interactions with the objects considered throughout the remaining chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 2 considers practices and material culture related to health and hygiene that could be found in the early modern Bolognese home. From the employment of wet nurses to musical instruments, silver ewers to linen swaddling bands and walnut cradles to straw mattresses, households featured a broad range of items to attend to the health-related needs of infants, children and other members of the household. These were practical, functional objects, but they were also symbols of social status, wealth and sometimes gender and thereby could reinforce the differences between families and family members from the early days of life.

The third chapter examines the ways in which rituals and talismanic objects were used to attend to the spiritual well-being of infants, children and young people. Baptism was meant to purify a new-born's soul, but, along with lying-in visits, was an opportunity to display status and wealth via material culture. Charms and amulets also

helped to keep infants and children safe from various harms and ailments, drawing on divine and magical power. These objects also provided a means by which aspects of a child's identity could be communicated, particularly regarding gender and age.

Children were also to play more active roles in caring for their spiritual wellbeing, which is the subject of Chapter 4. Through the use of devotional images found within domestic space, children learned about the Christian faith, as well as the words and gestures with which to pray. Images also offered examples of ideal roles, virtues and behaviours to be learned and followed depending on a child's gender and social class. Finally, young people were not only shaped or influenced by holy pictures, but created images themselves as acts of devotion, creativity and agency.

Chapter 5 shifts to the consideration of other kinds of learning that went on in the home, reading and writing in particular. Gender and social class were important factors in determining if and to what extent a child would learn to read and write, though had little bearing on how these skills were acquired, at least at a basic level. Bolognese households featured a range of texts appropriate and recommended for children as well as tools for writing and practicing these skills. There is also evidence that children and young people could use their literary abilities as a source of agency in determining their futures and roles within the family.

The sixth and final chapter continues to examine domestic education, here in relation to gender-specific skills, particularly swordsmanship and needlework. Children, especially from elite and wealthy families, needed to master these skills in order to fulfil their future roles in the city and family, which hinged on their social class and gender. And, Bolognese homes had many objects to support this kind of learning, from swords and shields to sewing baskets and skeins of thread, which simultaneously taught and reinforced the differences between the rich and poor, boys and girls.

Chapter 1: The Bolognese Domestic Interior, 1550-1600

This thesis demonstrates that children's interactions with domestic objects and images helped to fulfil their many and varied needs, as well as taught them where and how they fit into the hierarchy of the family, household and city. These objects, though, did not exist in a vacuum, and the spaces in which they were stored, displayed and used also served practical purposes: kitchens enabled the preparation of food, bedchambers offered a place to sleep and cellars provided a place to store wine. Domestic spaces, and the homes that they composed, also presented “portraits” of their inhabitants, in Giancarlo Roversi's words.⁴⁵ Their location, size and design might convey the social and economic status of the resident family, whilst design and decorative elements could suggest political affiliations or professional activities. The objects and images inside the home also worked in dialogue with each other and the spaces they inhabited to create meaning for both residents and visitors. This chapter is intended to provide an overview of some of the key spaces in which the objects considered in later chapters were stored, used and displayed, rather than as detailed history of Bolognese domestic architecture or interiors. It also demonstrates how these spaces could be both functional and meaningful to Bolognese families of various social classes.

The first section provides an overview of some of the key factors that influenced domestic architecture during this period, such as the Bentivoglio family's building projects of the late-fifteenth century, the coronation of Charles V in 1530 and renovations to Bologna's main square, Piazza Maggiore, in the 1560s. For the most part, these were civic projects; however, as we will see, they fuelled the desire to build and refurbish family palaces and shaped the way these structures looked, inside and out.

While the construction and remodelling of the *palazzi* of Bologna's wealthy and elite has left a lasting impression of the cityscape, most families neither built nor lived in palaces in this period. Instead, as the first section also considers, homes could be made within parts of larger structures, and could change over time. Individuals and families made temporary and more permanent moves over the months and years. Additionally, as people, both young and old, moved house, objects came and went with them.

The later sections of this chapter examine some of the key differences between homes of the wealthy and the less affluent. Section 2 considers how space was

⁴⁵ Roversi, *Palazzi*, 13.

organised and used in relation to the gender of a home's inhabitants and the ways in which this shifted depending on the social class of the resident family. The third section highlights the important role of sociability in Bolognese domestic life and the different spaces and objects that might support various types of social activities. Section 4 examines how a family's social class might determine how and where acts of devotion were performed, in particular focusing on domestic chapels.

1.1. Domestic Architecture in Sixteenth-Century Bologna

Although Bologna was officially part of the Papal States, the Bentivoglio family effectively, though illegitimately, ruled the city from 1438 until 1506.⁴⁶ The expulsion of the family from Bologna by Pope Julius II in 1506 and again in 1512 predates the scope of this study; however, Bentivoglio building projects, especially those constructed during the second-half of the fifteenth century, had a lasting influence on Bolognese architecture.⁴⁷ Most important here was the construction of the family's new palace, which began under Sante Bentivoglio in 1460 and continued under his successor, Giovanni II, until at least 1475.⁴⁸ Although the *palazzo*, which was located in Strà San Donato opposite the church of San Giacomo Maggiore, was destroyed in 1507, contemporary and slightly later chronicles describe it as one of the largest and most magnificent on the Italian peninsula.⁴⁹

The great size of Palazzo Bentivoglio marked a drastic shift in Bolognese domestic architecture. Prior to the construction of the palace, homes of the city's elite tended to be relatively small; those built over the course of the sixteenth century, though not as grand as Palazzo Bentivoglio, tended to be much larger than previous structures.⁵⁰ Many of the newly constructed and renovated homes and civic buildings also borrowed architectural features from the Bentivoglio palace. For instance, the crenulations, windows, pilasters and coats of arms that were added when Palazzo degli

⁴⁶ On the Bentivoglio family, see Cecilia M. Ady, *The Bentivoglio of Bologna: A Study in Despotism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969). On the court culture of the family see Bruno Basile (ed.), *Bentivolorum magnificentia: principe e cultura a Bologna nel Rinascimento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1984).

⁴⁷ For an overview of various Bentivoglio building projects (and others) see Naomi Miller, *Renaissance Bologna: A Study in Architectural Form and Content* (New York: P. Lang, 1989).

⁴⁸ On the palace see Wallace, 121; G. B. Liciardello, "Notes on the Architectural Patronage in the Bologna of the Bentivoglio" (Doctoral thesis, Columbia University, 1990); James, 188–96; and Clarke, 397–411.

⁴⁹ Wallace, 98. For instance see Cherubino Ghirardacci, *Della historia di Bologna* (Bologna, 1596), volume 33.

⁵⁰ Cuppini, 20.

Strazzaroli in Piazza Porta Ravegnana was renovated beginning in 1486 were modelled after the façade of the Bentivoglio palace (fig. 1.1).⁵¹ Additionally, the interior courtyard of Palazzo Sanuti (today Bevilacqua; fig. 1.2), the construction of which began in 1477, is also considered to be a fairly faithful replica of that of Palazzo Bentivoglio.⁵² Indeed, this layout, which featured a central courtyard with a double *loggia* and an entrance hall to one side with an off-centre main portal from the street, was to become increasingly common in Bologna over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁵³

Exterior features of the now lost palace can be seen in buildings still standing today, but aspects of the interior are more difficult to reconstruct. According to descriptions from the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries, Palazzo Bentivoglio was composed of various bedchambers, studies, oratories, storerooms, cellars and other rooms, many of which were richly decorated with gilded ceiling panels, friezes, intarsia and rich tapestries.⁵⁴ Some of the walls were also painted with frescoes by artists including Francesco Francia and Lorenzo Costa.⁵⁵ Although this type of decoration was not unique to this palace, it remained very popular in Bologna well into the sixteenth century. Indeed, as Caroline Murphy has noted, wealthy Bolognese were more likely to decorate the walls of their homes with frescoes than with panel paintings until the mid-1570s.⁵⁶

The construction of the Bentivoglio palace and the family's other building projects of the fifteenth century remained influential into the sixteenth century. Furthermore, while the expulsion of the family from the city in 1506 marked the beginning of a period of relative stability that encouraged an increase in building that lasted until the early-seventeenth century,⁵⁷ there were other factors that also contributed to this upswing. In particular, there was a need to increase Bologna's magnificence for special events and visits by important figures to the city. For instance, the coronation of the Emperor Charles V by Pope Clement VII took place in Bologna's basilica of San Petronio in 1530, which was preceded by the triumphal entry of both

⁵¹ Wallace, 108; Miller, *Renaissance Bologna*, 107; Cuppini, 55.

⁵² Wallace, 108-110; James, 191; Clarke, 402; Cuppini, 55-56.

⁵³ Cuppini, 56.

⁵⁴ Wallace, 113.

⁵⁵ Wallace, 113;

⁵⁶ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 12. Also see Cuppini, 32-33.

⁵⁷ Cuppini, 1, 33; Roversi, *Palazzi*, 13-14.

figures into the city, processions and other celebratory events.⁵⁸ This offered not only an opportunity to highlight Bologna's importance within the Papal States, but also to bolster the image of the city and its inhabitants.⁵⁹ Statues and triumphal arches were erected, public squares were richly ornamented and key sites throughout the city were even decorated to echo their counterparts in Rome as a means of legitimising Bologna as the location of the coronation.⁶⁰ Most relevant for this study, the pope and emperor's retinues, as well as the many important guests attending the coronation and surrounding events, had to be accommodated, requiring improvements to Bolognese palaces.⁶¹

Later in the sixteenth century, civic building and renovation projects, as well as the introduction of new laws around architectural features such as porticoes, beautified Bologna's churches, public squares and homes.⁶² For instance, beginning in the 1560s, extensive work was carried out in and around Piazza Maggiore, the city's main square. This work included the creation of Giambologna's *Fountain of Neptune* (based on designs by Tommaso Laureti; fig. 1.3) and the construction of the new seat for the University of Bologna, the Palazzo dell'Archiginnasio, designed by Antonio Morandi, both of which began in 1563.⁶³ Two years later the Archiginnasio was used as a model for the renovation of the façade of the Ospedale di Santa Maria della Morte (now the Museo Civico Archeologico).⁶⁴ This decade also saw the renovation of the Palazzo Comunale (fig. 1.3), with the building of two wings of apartments and the refurbishment of the Cappella del Legato.⁶⁵ Finally, beginning in 1565, the Palazzo dei Banchi was constructed based on designs by Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola as a means of modernising and unifying numerous gothic structures along the eastern edge of Piazza Maggiore (fig. 1.4).⁶⁶

Just as civic projects more often involved the renovation of existing structures than the construction of buildings from the ground up, it was more common for

⁵⁸ On the self-fashioning of the city for this event see Konrad Eisenbichler, "Charles V in Bologna: The Self-Fashioning of a Man and a City," *Renaissance Studies* 13, no. 4 (December 1, 1999): 430–39.

⁵⁹ Eisenbichler, "Charles V", 432.

⁶⁰ Eisenbichler, "Charles V", 434.

⁶¹ Roversi, *Palazzi*, 13–14; Miller, *Renaissance Bologna*, 21.

⁶² Roversi, *Palazzi*, 14.

⁶³ Richard J. Tuttle, "Vignola's Facciata Dei Banchi in Bologna," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 52, no. 1 (1993): 68–87, 70; and Naomi Miller, "Piazza Nettuno, Bologna: A Paean to Pius IV?" *Architectura*, VII, 1977, 14–39.

⁶⁴ Tuttle, 70.

⁶⁵ Tuttle, 72.

⁶⁶ Miller, *Renaissance Bologna*, 109–110; Tuttle, 68–87, esp. 78. As Tuttle highlights, this structure is better considered as a *facciata*, or facade, than a *palazzo* (p. 69).

sixteenth-century families to update or add to their homes than to build them anew.⁶⁷ This kind of work, particularly the practice of piecing together different structures to form a home, is apparent in some of the archival documents considered here.⁶⁸ For instance, the patrician Caccialupi family owned what was described in 1588 as, “a large house... to which there is attached a little house that borders with the Signori Alamandini”, as well as “another house nearby” and “a dwelling... a little distance from the above said large house”, all in Via Galliera (fig. 1.5).⁶⁹ The inventory of the objects found inside the “large house” further suggests a conglomeration of spaces for living, as it notes, for example, andirons for the new *sala*, usually translated as “hall”, and a credenza for the old *sala*.⁷⁰

Families lived in various structures combined to form one home, but they also lived in specific parts of larger buildings. For example the Bolognese notary Alberto Zanolini and his family resided in “two of three parts of a house” in the parish of San Leonardo.⁷¹ Similarly, Domenico Fieravanti, a shoemaker, lived in a structure that included a wine shop and cellar, which he neither owned nor operated.⁷² Thus, while

⁶⁷ This is how Sante Bentivoglio acquired the land needed for the construction of his family’s new palace (Wallace, 99). Catherine Fletcher has demonstrated the Casali family also accumulated land this way during the late-fifteenth century (pp. 21 & 27). Brenda Preyer has demonstrated how these kinds of dwellings created and maintained family memory in early modern Florence (“Florentine Palaces and Memories of the Past,” in *Art, Memory, and Family in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Giovanni Ciappelli and Patricia Lee Rubin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 176–94).

⁶⁸ The Bolognese architect Sebastiano Serlio, for instance, devoted an entire book of his architectural treatise to dealing with the problems of ancient dwellings, from misshapen lots to unifying the facades of multiple buildings (*Tutte l'opere d'architettura, et prospetiva* (Venice, 1619), 128–29). Also see Cuppini, 24–25.

⁶⁹ “Una casa grande dove habitano di presente detti sign^r Caccialupi come ancora hanno per il passato habitato posta in Galiera sul Canton della via di mezzo che referisse nel stradello detto il quartiolo, alla quale ci e attaccato un casino per rincontro che confina con li sig^{ri} Allamandini”, “un'altra casa a canto a quella pur in Galeria che ha l'uscio di dreto nel d^o stradello del quartiolo et e finita di stalla et confina con li fig^{li} lambertini dall'altra banda et l'affitta al ponte al sig^r stefano Allamandini scudi settanta d'oro di soldi Ottantacinque l'uno per anno”; “Una stalle grande in volta con la corte, Pozzo et boria Reggia et stanza per il Carchiere et un pollaro posta nel rend^o stradello d^o il quartiolo poco lontana dala sopra detta cassa grande dove habitano delli sig^{ri} Caccialupi confina da man destra con una casetta del sig^r Annibale Daimere et da man sinistra co la stalla delli sig^{ri} Lambertini et di dreto con il sig^r... san Giorgio”, Archivio di Stato di Bologna (hereafter ASB), *Notarile*, Tommaso Passarotti, 6/1 (1586–1587), 13 February 1588 (Lodovico Caccialupi), 347^v–365^r, 350^v. The main residence, today Via Galliera 13, is discussed briefly in Cuppini, 290–91. A quick glance through any volume of Giuseppe Guidicini's *Cose notabili della città di Bologna* (Bologna, 1868) offers many similar examples of families slowly acquiring property.

⁷⁰ “un par di cavedoni in sala nova d'ottone con il formimento suo” (354^r) and “una credenza di noce vecchia senza cassette in sala vecchia” (352^v).

⁷¹ “Item due parte de tre parte d'una casa murata cupata tassellata e balchionata posta in bologna in la capella di S^{to} leonardo...” and “Item u^a casa ruinosa co columbara posta dritte la chiesa del comun del borgo panig^{le} conta di bolog^a...” ASB, *Notarile*, Giacomo Simoni, 7/18 (1560–1569), f. 7 no. 35, 12 November 1569 (Inventario D Camillo et Bartolomeo Zanolini), 1^r–8^v, 3^v.

⁷² ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1571–1599), 23 June 1573 (Domenico di Fieravanti)(no pagination)

much scholarly attention has been paid to the construction of *palazzi* in sixteenth-century Bologna, most families neither lived in nor built palaces but rather resided in parts of larger structures or within structures that were made up of different parts.⁷³ Furthermore, just as there was a broad range in the type of dwellings that people inhabited, a person or family might change their residence temporarily or more permanently. Wealthy families, for example, often owned country homes where they might relocate for several months of the year, to escape from the city's summer heat or bouts of the plague.⁷⁴ The Caccialupi and Zanolini families noted above, for instance, both owned homes in the countryside.⁷⁵

The seasons and other events also influenced where poorer families and individuals lived. As Eleonora Canepari has shown, labourers went to Rome for certain months of the year and returned to their wives and children elsewhere as seasonal work diminished.⁷⁶ No similar study has been carried out for Bologna, but the building projects of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries discussed above surely drew labourers, artisans and craftsmen to the city. For instance, artists such as Michelangelo,⁷⁷ Tommaso Laureti and Giambologna came to live in Bologna while working on various commissions.⁷⁸ Finally, as the seat of Europe's oldest university, Bologna was host to a student population that fluctuated as courses of study began and ended. There were no student accommodations as we know them today and instead young men from the same cities or regions might form groups to rent out rooms, apartments or entire houses for their periods of study.⁷⁹

Children and young people also left and returned to their family homes. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, infants might live with wet nurses in the countryside for first few years of life, returning to their families only after they were weaned. When they got

⁷³ See the Historiography section of the Introduction to this thesis.

⁷⁴ On Bolognese villas more generally, see Cuppini and Armandi. For the comparison of the Bolognese Casali family's city and rural residences in Fletcher, 23-30.

⁷⁵ Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 3^v. The Caccialupi country home was located in Maccaretolo (Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 349^r-349^v).

⁷⁶ Eleonora Canepari, "Cohabitations, Household Structures, and Gender Identities in Seventeenth-Century Rome," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 17, no. 1 (March 1, 2014): 131-54.

⁷⁷ Ellen L. Longworth, "Michelangelo and the Eye of the Beholder: The Early Bologna Sculptures," *Artibus et Historiae* 23, no. 46 (2002): 77-82.

⁷⁸ On Laureti in Bologna see Elisabetta Berselli, *Tommaso Laureti e la committenza bolognese durante il pontificato di Gregorio XIII* (Rome: Il Carrobbio, 1991). There is a large bibliography on Giambologna; on his *Nettuno*, see *Il Nettuno del Giambologna: storia e restauro* edited by Giulio Bizzarri, Marco Guidi, Aurora Lucarelli (Milan: Electa, 1989).

⁷⁹ Paul F. Grendler, "Fencing, Playing Ball, and Dancing in Italian Renaissance Universities," in *Sport and Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. John McClelland (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2009), 295-319; 296.

older, children might be sent away again, to live in another household as an apprentice or servant. Although university students made Bologna their temporary home for a number of years, younger boys also came to study and stayed in the households of noble or respected families. Count Alessandro Manzoli, for instance, hosted Alessandro, Ottavio and Ranuccio Farnese, grandsons of Pope Paul III, in his home in the parish of San Leonardo while they were being educated in Bologna.⁸⁰

With no formal court in the city, Bolognese families also sent their sons away to act as pages or squires to knights or to gain experience and develop family connections at the Papal Court. For example, in the late-sixteenth century, the Bolognese senator Marc'Antonio Bianchetti sent his son, Cesare, to live and learn in Rome with the boy's uncle, Cardinal Lorenzo Bianchetti.⁸¹ Cesare's cousins, Maria Maddalena and Ludovica Caccialupi were also sent away from their family home in Via Galliera, however in this instance the move was permanent, as they took vows at the Convent of Santa Caterina in Strada Maggiore in 1578.⁸²

While individuals like the Caccialupi sisters might leave their homes for good, whole families moved house, too. The Bolognese painter Lavinia Fontana, for instance, moved with her household, which included her parents, husband and children, from their home in Via Galliera to Via della Fondazza on the other side of the city in the late 1580s.⁸³ Twenty years later and following the death of her father, Fontana and her mother, husband and four children moved again, this time to Rome.⁸⁴

Thus, most people experienced various "homes" over the course of their lives, often related to a life event, such as marriage, birth, death or illness. Moreover, they did not necessarily enter or leave a home empty-handed, but instead could bring with them a number of objects. In early modern Bologna, as elsewhere, marriage not only united two people and their families, but was an important moment for the ritual exchange of

⁸⁰ Giovanni Pietro de' Crescenzi Romani, *Corona della nobiltà d'Italia, ovvero, Compendio dell' istorie delle famiglie illustri* (Bologna, 1639), 527 and Pompeo Scipione Dolfi, *Cronologia delle famiglie nobili di Bologna* (Bologna, 1670), 517. Ottavio Farnese is not named by these two writers, however Craig Monson has demonstrated that he and Alessandro were in Bologna together ("The Composer as 'Spy': The Ferraboscis, Gabriele Paleotti, and the Inquisition," *Music & Letters* 84, no. 1 (2003): 1–18; 8).

⁸¹ Dolfi, 146 and Carl-Antonio del Frate, *Vita del Venerabile servo di Dio Cesare Bianchetti Senatore di Bologna a fondatore della congregazione di San Gabriele* (Venice, 1716), 9.

⁸² The sisters both signed professions of faith on 1 May 1578. ASB, *Demaniale*, Corporazioni religiose soppresse, Santa Caterina (1403-1795), 101/4027, f. 40 (Maria Madalena) and 47 (Lodovica).

⁸³ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 91.

⁸⁴ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 195.

objects.⁸⁵ Grooms acquired furnishings for the home or chamber of the newly married couple and brides also brought with them trousseaux of goods including furniture, paintings and cooking utensils.⁸⁶

The birth of a child also brought objects into the home, as items such as swaddling bands, blankets, sheets and even charms were needed for the new-born. Objects might also be procured for women during pregnancy, childbirth and the recovery that followed.⁸⁷ Special clothing and textiles were obtained for the child's baptism and the mother's lying-in period, to decorate the mother and infant as well as the bedchamber. Finally, friends and relatives gave gifts to the family, who also exchanged gifts with the child's godparents.⁸⁸

These special objects, as well as those associated with everyday life, and the ways in which they were acquired and used are discussed in greater depth throughout the chapters of this thesis. The next sections of this chapter aim to provide an overview, albeit brief, of the spaces in which those objects were stored, displayed and used; where the events of everyday life unfolded and special events took place. Although Bolognese homes served to shelter residents, provide a space to carry out everyday chores, special events and visits or support prayer, the sizes of these spaces as well as the ways in which they were organised were all closely tied to inhabitants' wealth, social class and gender.

1.2. Gendered Spaces in the Bolognese Home

One of the most notable differences between the homes of Bolognese artisans and patricians is the gendered division of space. In part, this is because the homes of artisans

⁸⁵ Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "The Griselda Complex: Dowry and Marriage Gifts in the Quattrocento," in *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 213–46.

⁸⁶ See, for example, Deborah L. Krohn, "Marriage as a Key to Understanding the Past", in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, edited by Andrea Bayer (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008), 9–16; Sara F. Matthews Grieco, "Marriage and Sexuality," in *At Home*, 104–19; Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family in the Florentine Renaissance Palace* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008).

⁸⁷ See Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999);

⁸⁸ See Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*; *ibid.*, "Lambs, Coral, Teeth, and the Intimate Intersection of Religion and Magic in Renaissance Tuscany," in *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Sally J. Cornelison and Scott B. Montgomery (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006), 139–56; Patricia Allerston, "'Contrary to the Truth and Also to the Semblance of Reality'? Entering a Venetian 'lying-In' Chamber (1605)," *Renaissance Studies* 20, no. 5 (2006): 629–39; Patricia Fortini Brown, "Children and Education," in *At Home*, 136–43.

were typically smaller than those of the wealthy, and it might be necessary for male and female residents to share just a few rooms for work, sleep, eating and prayer. But there was also a desire, at least according to moralists, to sequester upper-class women and girls from male family members and especially visitors to the home.⁸⁹ It is unclear if or to what degree this was put into practice, but there were certainly upper class homes with spaces to accommodate the separation of male and female residents. For instance, as was discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Alessandra Carminali Bianchetti had her own apartment within the family's *palazzo* on Strà San Donato (fig. 1.6), which was “composed of eight or nine rooms”, including several *sale* and bedchambers.⁹⁰ Although it is unknown how these chambers were arranged or where they were located within the *palazzo*, documents pertaining to another patrician home give some indication of how space could be divided along gendered lines. The inventory drawn up after the death of the Bolognese nobleman Camillo Caccianemici in 1551 lists the items found in his bedchamber, study, the granary and a storeroom.⁹¹ It then moves on to describe the courtyard followed by another storeroom, the cellar, kitchen and finally the two chambers belonging to Camillo's wife, Perpetua.⁹² The way these spaces are described suggests that those associated with the lady of the house were physically separated from those linked to her husband by the courtyard. This does not mean that the couple lived entirely apart, and surely Perpetua visited Camillo's chambers and vice versa; however, the layout of their home suggests that it was possible for both to carry out many of their respective duties in separate spaces.

In less-affluent homes, there still seem to have been spaces for male and female family members, though they were less distinct. For instance, Caterina and Artemisia, daughters of the Bolognese printmaker and architect Domenico Tibaldi, appear to have shared a bedchamber with their grandmother. The inventory drawn up following their father's death in 1583 describes a *camera*, or bedchamber, with different items “for the girls” as well as for “the old woman”.⁹³ This space seems to have only been accessible

⁸⁹ For example see Giacomo Lanteri, *Della economica* (Venice, 1560), 38.

⁹⁰ Ghiselli, 447.

⁹¹ ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1551-1559), 3 August 1551 (Camillo Caccianemici)(no pagination).

⁹² Perpetua is not named in the inventory, but she is noted in a genealogical document regarding the Caccianemici family (ASB, *Archivio Studio Alidosi*, Documentazione diversa relativa a famiglie, e così suddivisa - Malvasia... XVI-XVII, b. 1, Breve Compendio (no pagination)).

⁹³ Within this *camera*, the inventory lists, for instance, “some books for the girls” (“delli libri per le putte”) as well as “a furred garment [belonging to] the old woman” (“una Peliza della detta vecchia”). Michelangelo Gualandi, *Memorie originali italiane risguardanti le belle arti* (Bologna, 1840), 36.

by passing through Tibaldi's *camino*, a term that often indicates a room with a hearth,⁹⁴ into a small chamber and then through a small bedchamber to which the girls' chamber was attached.⁹⁵ This is similar to the organisation of space in the home of Bartolomeo Rota, a Bolognese notary. The inventory drawn up after Rota died in 1574 describes the contents of a *camino*, followed by a bedchamber to which a second bedchamber was attached. There seems to have been little in terms of furniture in this last bedchamber apart from a bed “in the courtesan style” with a curtain, sheets and coverlet and a bench.⁹⁶ Although there is no clear indication of by whom this chamber was inhabited, architects and moralists advised that daughters be installed in chambers inaccessible to the average visitor. As Leon Battista Alberti explained in his treatise on architecture, *De re aedificatoria* (1452), which was translated from Latin into Italian by Cosimo Bartoli in 1550, girls and young women should reside in chambers that were nicely furnished but accessible only to family members, such as the dressing rooms off of their mothers' chambers, with nurses sleeping nearby.⁹⁷ Likewise, and closer to the period under consideration here, the Bolognese architect Sebastiano Serlio argued in his treatise that daughters would be most securely kept in small chambers above and accessible via those of their mothers.⁹⁸ Consequently, the sparsely furnished, rather remote bedchamber in Rota's home may have been suitable for a daughter or other female family member, similar to that inhabited by Caterina and Artemisia Tibaldi.

This kind of separation was unlikely if not impossible in more humble households. For example, the Bolognese shoemaker Domenico Fieravanti's home featured only two bedchambers. The inventory of his household drawn up in 1573 notes that one bedchamber was directly above and probably connected to his workshop by a ladder, which would have made it an inappropriate place for his wife to sleep. Instead, she more likely inhabited the second bedchamber, which was located “at the front [of

⁹⁴ The household inventories considered here suggest that *camini* were sometimes similar to *sale*, but also in some instances contained one or more bed, making them more like *camere*.

⁹⁵ Gualandi, 34-36.

⁹⁶ The contents of this bedchamber include: “una lettiera d nuse alla cortesana con li piedi ataco[;] un letto di pena de ocha con il cavezale d pena d Galina[;] un par d lenzoli in detto letto de canva[;] un pezo di spaliera ataca per coltrina[;] un banchaletto d tela forestiera vecchio[;] un par di lenzoli d caneva vecchi con le radeslle” (46^r-46^v) and “un sparaviero d tela biacha fiocato de bombase[;] un linzolo d caneva vecchio[;] una cassa da abedo”. ASB, *Notarile*, Giulio Rota, 6/6 (1571-1592), 7 August 1574, (Inventario di Bartolomeo Rota), 44^v-47^v, 45^v.

⁹⁷ “Et in la stanza de le vesti, le figliuole & fanciulle, & vicine a loro stieno a dormire le balie.” Leon Battista Alberti, *L'architettura*, trans. Cosimo Bartoli (Florence, 1550), 155. Also see Lanteri, 37-38.

⁹⁸ Serlio, 146.

the house] above the door”.⁹⁹ With fewer spaces in the shoemaker's home, it would have been more difficult to keep men and women separate from each other. Indeed, images of artisans' homes sometimes show male and female residents at work within the same space. For instance, Federico Zuccaro's drawing from the end of the sixteenth century shows a domestic scene at night, where the artist Giovanni Piero Calabrese works on a drawing, his apprentice, Taddeo, grinds colours on a *scabello*, or stool, and a woman spins by the fire (fig. 1.7). In humble homes, there might only be one hearth, which would be a source of both heat and light for work on cold days and dark evenings, meaning the space had to be shared by the sexes.¹⁰⁰ In Zuccaro's drawing, the hearth, shelves of pots and dishes suggest this may have been a space similar to the shoemaker's *camino*, the inventory of which notes the presence of several benches, a table and a credenza, “with six dishes and six earthenware trenchers above it”.¹⁰¹ Indeed, the *camino* seems to be the only room in which there was a table, hinting that it was, out of necessity, a multi-functional space.

In contrast to images of artisans' homes that show men and women at work within the same space, representations of upper-class homes suggest female residents worked in chambers separate from men, or that men were not present during their working hours. Although they are not mirrors of everyday day, these kinds of representations show types of work that went on in the home as can be verified through household inventories and other sources, which is discussed in Chapter 6. For example, Luca Bertelli's *Lucretia and her Companions* (c. 1560) depicts three women at work spinning, sewing and embroidering in a large and richly appointed bedchamber, each engaged in her own task.¹⁰² There is a small child in a walker present along with his nurse or a servant in the background, but there are no men within this space. Although these women appear to work in silence, those depicted in Giovanni Stradano's *Preparing the Eggs of Silkworms* (c. 1590) work together and interact with each other (fig. 1.8). The drawing shows women of various ages and social classes engaged in different aspects of the preparation of silkworms and their eggs, quite a different kind of textile work than that depicted by Bertelli; however, these women are also in a large, richly decorated bedchamber without men present.

⁹⁹ “nel camino divanti sopra il porto”, Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti).

¹⁰⁰ On this image see Casal, 49.

¹⁰¹ “una cridenza di legno dolce co sei scudele et sei tonde di terra sopra”, Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti).

¹⁰² See the reproduction and brief discussion of this scene in Patricia Fortini Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice: Art, Architecture, and the Family* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), 90-91.

Neither image offers a reflection of reality, and certainly in small homes women might sew, spin or embroider alone or with companions in a *camino*, bedchamber or other space whilst male family members were away from the house; however, as Bolognese household inventories and chronicles suggest, large, wealthy households featured more space and thus more possibilities to segregate the sexes than in humble homes, as women might have their own bedchambers or even whole apartments. Therefore, girls from elite families could, at least in theory, have been more easily sequestered from male residents and visitors, while those growing up in artisan households, for example, might have been exposed to their fathers' work as well as apprentices or associates. The Bolognese painter, Orazio Sammachini, for instance, provided a testimony to Severo Zappi regarding his future daughter-in-law, Lavinia Fontana. Sammachini described Fontana's character, manners, painterly skill and suitability as a wife for Zappi's son, Gian Paolo, having known Fontana through work and friendship with her father, Prospero.¹⁰³ Lavinia had trained as a painter in her father's workshop alongside artists such as Denis Calvaert and Ludovico Carracci,¹⁰⁴ and her education and interactions with these men would have been inappropriate if not impossible had the studio been located outside the confines of the family's home. Similarly, though later, the painter Francesco Albani also worked in his home studio, with his wife and children acting as both critics of and models for his paintings. These and other family members also reportedly came into contact with Albani's apprentices, clients and other artists because of the overlap between professional and domestic space.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, both male and female children of artisans whose workshops and homes were within the same structures had an increased chance of observing, if not being influenced by various aspects of their fathers' work and individuals associated with it.

1.3. Social Spaces

The tasks associated with everyday living could be carried out in a sociable way, as just noted, but more formal social gatherings also took place in domestic space. The homes of artisans, merchants and patricians all seem to have been suited to hosting social

¹⁰³ Prospero's wife, Antonia, was also godmother to Sammachini's daughter, Ginevra when she was born in 1575. Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 38-39.

¹⁰⁴ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 24 and 38-39.

¹⁰⁵ Casal, 61.

events, albeit in different ways. Families with more money could afford to have larger houses with a greater number of chambers, including spacious or specialised rooms, which were also necessary for hosting the type of social events expected of the elite. Wedding banquets, theatrical performances and dancing, for instance, required quite large spaces, which were, for the most part only found in the homes of the very wealthy. The *sala*, for instance, usually located on the first floor of a home, was typically the largest space in the house. It functioned as a sort of threshold between the more public and private areas of the home, but was also furnished so as to support large-scale social activities. For example, Count Filippo Manzoli's *sala* featured, "a long walnut table on trestles", as well as seven chairs, twelve benches and a large credenza.¹⁰⁶ These kinds of furnishings were typical of Bolognese *sala*, and could support large banquets or other gatherings.¹⁰⁷ Additionally, tables on trestles could be taken apart and moved to make room for activities such as dancing or music.¹⁰⁸ Along with the table and ample seating, the Manzoli *sala* also featured a large harpsichord, which likely supported musical gatherings in this home, as is discussed in Chapter 2.

Whether they were attending a party or being received for less festive occasions, guests to the homes of Bologna's elite might also be impressed by paintings, weapons, armour or textiles with coats of arms on display within the *sala*. We find these kinds of items in the Manzoli home in 1560, as well as that of the nobleman Sanfranco Marescotti in 1574 and of the Bolognese knight, Ludovico Caccialupi in 1588.¹⁰⁹ These objects are discussed in relation to the upbringing and social formation of boys and young men in Chapter 6, though here it is important to highlight that they would have communicated to visitors the high social rank of the family as well as celebrating individuals and their military or other achievements.¹¹⁰

Guests at a banquet or paying another type of social visit to the home of a wealthy Bolognese family might also be impressed by other features common to *sala*,

¹⁰⁶ The contents of the Manzoli *sala* included: "Uno desco di nuce longo con tri pedoni de nuce[;] Uno alltro quadretto di nuce[;] Sette carieghe[;] Dodeci banzole[;] Un credenzone di nuse [;] Un chiavacembalo grande[;] Un paro de cavedoni grandi tutti forniti de ottone[;] Una forcella grande di ferro[;] Due scranne di paviera[;] Un rastello di arme d'asta con 21 piche[;] Una banca[;] Un calamar da scriver d'arcipresso[;] Tri quadri de pittur[;] Quatro casse verde con quatro coffani coperti di drappo dorato". ASB, *Notarile*, Francesco Nobili, 6/1 (1558-1560), f. 144, 3 February 1560 (Co Filippo Manzoli) (no pagination).

¹⁰⁷ For example see ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1571-1599), 31 May 1574 (Sanfranco di Marescotti) (no pagination); ASB, *Notarile*, Carl Antonio Berni, 6/9 (1616-1619), Prot. 2, f. 15, 8 March 1617 (Inventario di Heredita di D. Carl'Antonio Caccialupi) 15^v-21^v, 16^r.

¹⁰⁸ Marta Ajmar-Wollheim, "Sociability," in *At Home*, 206-21; 210-11.

¹⁰⁹ Notaio Sigurani (Marescotti) and Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r.

¹¹⁰ Patricia Fortini Brown, "The Venetian *casa*," in *At Home*, 50-65; 57.

such as fireplaces. These were necessary to warm and dry the air, but could also be immense and designed to impress.¹¹¹ For example, a sixteenth-century fireplace formerly in the home of the Bolognese Berò family and now in the city's Museo Medievale demonstrates how large and grandiose these architectural elements could be (fig. 1.9). Although difficult to tell from the reproduction, the stone fireplace is so tall (at over 1.5 metres) that the griffons tower over most observers. Additionally, the decoration along the top of the mantelpiece shows musical instruments, which perhaps refer to the kinds of activities that went on in the Berò *sala*, as in that of the Manzoli family. Finally, the fireplace also features the family's coat of arms, linking it and the space in which it was situated directly to the noble lineage.

Thus, the *sala* was a space that could support large-scale social activities from dining to dancing to music, whilst at the same time demonstrating the status, wealth and success of the resident family. This type of space, and the large-scale events that it hosted, seems to have been limited to patrician homes; however, families of less affluence also hosted social gatherings, and their homes featured spaces, furniture and other items to support these activities. For example, the *camino* in the home of the Bolognese shoemaker Domenico Fieravanti, discussed in the section above, seems to have functioned very much like a *sala*, though presumably it was smaller in scale. This space featured a hearth, table, benches, credenza with dishes displayed above it and a chest filled with plates.¹¹² Indeed, this was the location of the only table listed in the household inventory, suggesting that meals were consumed in the *camino* but also that it could accommodate several people, who might gather to visit or eat together. Unlike *sala* in patrician homes, however, Fieravanti's *camino* did not feature any weapons, armour or musical instruments, nor were there wall-hangings, portraits or items with coats of arms. Therefore, the presence or absence of these kinds of objects, along with the size and splendour of the spaces in which they were located would convey to visitors the social status and wealth of the home's inhabitants.

Smaller or more intimate social gatherings also took place in Bolognese homes, often in the *camera*, or bedchamber. This was one of the most important spaces in the

¹¹¹ Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior 1400-1600* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1991), 20-22 and 290; Brenda Preyer, "The Florentine *casa*," in *At Home* 34-49; 37; Peta Motture and Luke Syson, "Art in the Casa," in *At Home*, 268-83; 269.

¹¹² "nel camino disopra sopra la cantina cinq banzole da sedere da nuso no 5[;] una cassa d nusa no 1[;] un tripiedi d nusa no 1[;] una cass d legno dolce co delli piateli et pignate dentre no 1[;] una cridenza d legno dolce co sei scudele et sei tonde d terra sopra co un olla d finochi salati dentro no 1[;] una tavoletta d nuso co li piedi no 1[;] cinq anconino fra piccola e grande no 5", Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti).

home and could be found in patrician *palazzi* as well as much more humble abodes. The *camera* was typically the location of at least one bed and was a place to sleep,¹¹³ but also to receive guests, pray, work and eat meals, for instance, just on a smaller scale than in the *sala* or *camino*.¹¹⁴ This was also the space in which special events might take place, such as visits to a new mother following the birth of a child. Discussed in more depth in Chapter 2, these were festive and celebratory events for which the bedchamber, as well as the new mother and child, would be adorned to impress friends and family that came to visit and give gifts. The description of Alessandra Carminali Bianchetti's apartment for such an event discussed in the introduction to this thesis demonstrates how rich the decoration of various chambers could be in an elite home; however, more humble families also used what resources they had to create a festive environment to celebrate the birth of a child.¹¹⁵

1.4. Spaces for Domestic Devotion

As is discussed in Chapter 4, religious images could be found in the homes, and concentrated in bedchambers, of Bolognese artisans, notaries, merchants and patricians, especially after the mid-1570s.¹¹⁶ In addition to holy pictures, households also featured rosaries, Agnus Dei and aspergilla to support domestic devotional practices, which could take place in various domestic spaces. A person might meditate in their bedchamber, families were to recite prayers together at meal times and children were to say a prayer before leaving and re-entering the home.¹¹⁷ These kinds of practices could in theory have been carried out in most Christian homes, though the material culture related to them, items like images and rosary beads, might range in value and quality depending on the wealth and social status of the family. Indeed, some practices required no physical objects at all; as scholars have demonstrated, any part of the early modern home could be transformed into a religious space with the recitation of prayers, particular postures, gestures or other actions and behaviours.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 285.

¹¹⁴ Preyer, "Florentine *casa*", 34-49, 45; Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 288.

¹¹⁵ See Allerston's article on the decoration of the *camera* of a Venetian wool merchant in celebration of the birth of a child, for instance.

¹¹⁶ See a brief discussion of this in Section 1 of Chapter 4 in this thesis.

¹¹⁷ *Psalterio*, 12^v & 15^r.

¹¹⁸ Margaret A. Morse, "Creating Sacred Space: The Religious Visual Culture of the Renaissance Venetian Casa," *Renaissance Studies* 21, no. 2 (2007): 151–84, especially 156. Also see Donal Cooper, "Devotion," in *At Home*, 190-203.

Domestic chapels, though, were a means by which a family could reserve a place for religious practices and rituals, but they were the preserve of the very wealthy and well connected. From the fifth century, a papal or episcopal license was required for a private chapel or altar, and those granted this privilege were noble, wealthy and had close ties to the Church.¹¹⁹ Following the Council of Trent, private domestic chapels had to be separate from the *sala*, used by a limited number of worshippers and closable.¹²⁰ Additionally, a crucifix, two candlesticks and a chalice were required on the altar for celebration of the mass, though many other objects were also usually included in domestic chapels, such as bells, benches, missals and vestments.¹²¹

Because of the material and monetary requirements of having a chapel, they were uncommon in early modern Bolognese homes. In fact, out of the households considered here there is only once instance of a chapel in a home, that of the knight, Ludovico Caccialupi. The inventory drawn up after his death in 1588 lists, “for the chapel”: a chalice, two brass candlesticks, a brass bell, missal with a cushion, a gilded cross with a crucifixion, two Agnus Dei and vestments worn by a priest when celebrating mass.¹²² An inventory of the same dwelling drawn up nearly thirty years later suggests that the chapel was located adjacent to the *sala* (or one of the home’s *sale*),¹²³ though it is unclear if it was possible to close this space off from the rest of the house. The chapel would have allowed the Caccialupi family to hear mass within their home, not only a sign of piety, but also of their social class, wealth and privilege.

Conclusion

Bolognese homes were composed of spaces intended to meet the needs of inhabitants, providing shelter, a place to eat, pray and sleep. The size and layout of a home and its spaces also facilitated and encouraged various activities and behaviours, from work to socialising and eating to prayer. These activities, and the spaces that they required were

¹¹⁹ Philip Mattox, “Domestic Sacral Space in the Florentine Renaissance Palace,” *Renaissance Studies* 20, no. 5 (2006): 658–73; 660.

¹²⁰ Mattox, 672.

¹²¹ Cooper, 199–201.

¹²² “per la capello ci e[.] una scatola da ossie et ampolline[.] Un calice con la borsa incarnata[.] Una patena[.] una pianeta[.] Un camice con l'amitto et cordone et stole[.] Un campanino di bronzo[.] Due cappellotti d'ottone[.] Due candelieri d'ottone[.] Un croce dorata con un crocifisso[.] Un palio di damasco con le frange azzurre et d'oro[.] Due Agnus dei ligatte in oro[.] Un messale con il cuscinetto”. Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 358^v.

¹²³ Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 16^r.

closely tied to inhabitants' social class and gender. As we have seen, elite families might require chambers or apartments to keep male and female residents separate; spacious *sale* in which to host banquets and dancing; and domestic chapels in which to hold private mass. These spaces and activities were out of reach for most citizens, though they still hosted social events, used chambers in gender-specific ways and engaged in devotional practices at home. Thus, domestic spaces worked in dialogue with each other, objects and images to create meaning and convey messages about inhabitants' social class, gender, faith and position within the household and the city. As the next chapter demonstrates, these messages could be imparted to children from their earliest days.

Chapter 2: Children's Health and Hygiene

Authors of sixteenth-century treatises on the household and family wrote at length about the importance of raising good Christian children, charging fathers and mothers with teaching them about faith and devotion, as is discussed in the next chapter. Because Christian souls resided in a physical body, “created in the image and likeness of God”, in the words of the moralist Andrea Ghetti, it needed to be respected and kept in good working order.¹²⁴ Furthermore, in this period, maintaining good health was seen to be a good defence against illness and death, as recent studies of health, hygiene and cleanliness in the early modern period have demonstrated.¹²⁵ Thus it was necessary to care for the bodies of a home's inhabitants for the purposes of both spiritual and physical health, and many Bolognese households contained an array of objects to do so, as this chapter will demonstrate.

In the sixteenth century, the widespread belief in Greco-Roman humoral theory dominated ideas and practices around physical, mental and emotional health.¹²⁶ The theory held that there were four fluids present in the body: blood, black bile, yellow bile and phlegm, each created by specific organs: the heart, spleen, liver and brain, respectively. The fluids were also associated with the qualities dry, wet, hot and cold, as well as the four elements: earth, water fire and air. While these qualities and the balance of humours shifted from person to person to produce individual “complexions” or temperaments, men were generally considered hot and dry while women were cold and wet.¹²⁷ Indeed, the absence of heat was what those following the Aristotelian tradition believed to make females female. In the womb, heat was required to “push out” the genitals, which resulted in a male child; those without enough heat were born with inverted genitals, resulting in a female, the imperfect version of a male.¹²⁸

An individual's humoral complexion determined their sex as well as other qualities and characteristics, and an imbalance in humoral fluids could result in illness

¹²⁴ Andrea Ghetti, *Discorso sopra la cura, et diligenza che debbono hauere i padri, & le madri uerso i loro figliuoli si nella ciuilità come nella pietà christiana ...* (Bologna, 1572), 8^v.

¹²⁵ See for instance, Sandra Cavallo and Tessa Storey, *Healthy Living in Late Renaissance Italy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Douglas Biow, *The Culture of Cleanliness in Renaissance Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Alessandro Arcangeli, *Recreation in the Renaissance: Attitudes towards Leisure and Pastimes in European Culture, 1350-1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

¹²⁶ Rudolph M. Bell, *How to Do It: Guides to Good Living for Renaissance Italians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 17

¹²⁷ Bell, 17; Arcangeli, 19; Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 32.

¹²⁸ Wiesner, 32.

and ailments of the mind, body and spirit. The treatments for various conditions ranged from bloodletting to changes in diet, but prevention, or keeping the humours in balance, was also key to healthy living.¹²⁹ In particular, there were “non-natural” factors that impacted health and could, to some extent, be controlled to keep a balanced complexion, including the quality of the air one breathed, type of food and drink consumed, activity or exercise and sleep.¹³⁰ These topics were often covered in medical texts, and not just written in Latin for learned physicians, but in the vernacular for use by families and even, in some cases, addressed women directly.¹³¹ Thus, early modern families had access to information about health and hygiene via texts as well as through experience and knowledge shared verbally and possessed many tools that helped to create healthy domestic environments.¹³²

This chapter uses treatises, extant objects, paintings, prints and domestic inventories to explore the care for children's physical health and wellbeing within those environments during the second-half of the sixteenth century. Children would have benefited from spaces, objects and practices aimed at maintaining or improving the health of the household as a whole, such as healthy meals, fires in hearths that warmed and dried the air and the playing of music. There were also items that were specifically intended to serve needs particular to children and infants, such as swaddling bands and cradles. While these kinds of practices and objects served practical and important purposes, they were also often symbolic; as is discussed below, most families had ewers, basins and close-stools, for instance, but very few had sets in silver or decorated with gilded-walnut moulding. Luxury objects might have helped keep bodies healthy, but also sometimes signalled the gender of those bodies and the social class to which they belonged, even from the first moments of life.

The first section of this chapter examines how infants and children were nourished, from the employment of wet nurses to the preparation of meals. As we will see, the types of food that were considered appropriate for children were determined not only by age, but also by social class and gender. And, the consumption of certain types of food was even believed to maintain or enhance class-based differences. Thus, eating habits both shaped and were shaped by aspects of identity.

¹²⁹ Prevention of illness is the main concern of Cavallo and Storey.

¹³⁰ Cavallo and Storey, 3; Arcangeli, 19.

¹³¹ See for example, Scipione Mercurio's *La commare o raccoglitrice* (Venice, 1596), which is addressed to midwives. Also see Bell, 67.

¹³² See Sandra Cavallo, “Health, Beauty and Hygiene,” in *At Home*, 174–87.

Section 2 considers physical exercise for children, both as part of physical development but also as a means of expelling waste from the body. As with diet, age, gender and social class were key factors in determining appropriate types of exercise and at the same time, emphasised the differences between the rich and poor, boys and girls, the young and old. The third section of this chapter explores how children were kept clean as a means of maintaining good health. The presence of items such as ewers, basins and personal linens in the homes of artisan, professional and patrician families indicates that cleanliness and good hygiene were important across the social classes; however, the materials of which these kinds of objects were made and decorated could also impart information about the owners' wealth and social status.

The inventories considered here list more clothing and textiles intended for children than any other kind of item, which are the focus of the fourth section of this chapter. From swaddling bands to mantles to breeches, the items in Bolognese households give us some insight into how children's bodies were kept warm, clean and dry as part of good health, but also how they were adorned and presented to the world. Considered alongside sumptuary laws, advice from authors of treatises on childrearing, portraits and extant children's garments, this section highlights the complexities of dress in late sixteenth-century Bologna.

In addition to food and clothing, children required a warm and safe place to sleep, and many Bolognese households featured items to attend to this need. A family's social class and financial resources, though, might determine whether a child slept in a shared bed, flock-mattress or ornate cradle as is examined in Section 5.

Together, the sections of this chapter demonstrate that Bolognese households featured a range of items related to maintaining good health. These objects and the practices with which they were associated, were in some instances specific to children's needs and in others attended to the broader needs of the household. They were also very closely related to a family's social class and employed according to age and gender. Therefore, whilst serving quite practical and necessary purposes, items related to diet, exercise, washing, dress and sleep also helped to establish and reinforce where individuals were situated in household and civic hierarchies.

2.1. Nourishing the Body

Early modern eating habits have recently received increasing scholarly attention, due to the growing interest in objects and tools associated with cooking and dining, as well as

early recipe books and “books of secrets”.¹³³ Sixteenth-century authors of medical and household treatises also attended to diet, including advice on what, when and how children might eat. This was important not only because different foods had to be eaten at the right time of day and in the right order to ensure good digestion, but also because children were seen to be quite fragile and of a very hot humoural complexion.¹³⁴ This meant, for example, children were exempt from fasting but also that they needed to avoid wine and cold drinks.¹³⁵

Social class was even more important than age in determining what a person ate in this period. People from different social classes were thought to digest certain types of food more or less easily and it was believed that one absorbed the humoural qualities of one’s food; therefore, what might have been appropriate for the son of a stonemason to eat may not have been so for the son of a senator.¹³⁶ Gender also played a role in determining diet in the early modern period, and treatises present some ideas about appropriate eating and drinking habits for male and female children, especially around the consumption of milk and, later, wine.

In the sixteenth century, many children spent their first two years or so under the care of a wet nurse. Infants from artisan, mercantile and patrician families were often sent to a wet nurse’s home, either in the city or countryside or, less often, she came to live with the family.¹³⁷ For instance, Gaspare di Nadi, a Bolognese stonemason, recorded sending both of his daughters to the wet nurse in his late-fifteenth-century diary.¹³⁸ Closer to the period considered here, the list of debts left to the minor sons of Troilo di Bolelli, described simply as an “inhabitant of Bologna”, following his death in

¹³³ For instance, see Allen J. Grieco, “Meals,” in *At Home*, 244–53; Elaine Leong and Alisha Rankin (eds.), *Secrets and Knowledge in Medicine and Science, 1500-1800*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013). Tessa Storey has compiled a database of Italian books of secrets, available via the University of Leicester: < <http://hdl.handle.net/2381/4335>>.

¹³⁴ Cavallo and Storey, 209-10.

¹³⁵ Cavallo and Storey, 210, 220, 225.

¹³⁶ Grieco, “Meals,” 246-52 and *ibid.* “From Roosters to Cocks: Italian Renaissance Fowl and Sexuality,” in *Erotic Cultures of Renaissance Italy*, ed. Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2010), 110–25; *ibid.* “Food and Social Classes in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy,” in *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Jean Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, trans. Albert Sonnenfeld, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 302–12.

¹³⁷ Bell has argued that sending infants to wet nurses in the countryside was much less common than scholars such as James Bruce Ross and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber have suggested. See *Bell*, 131-137; as well as Ross, “The Middle-Class Child in Urban Italy, Fourteenth to Early Sixteenth Century,” in *The History of Childhood*, ed. Lloyd DeMause (London: Souvenir Press, 1976), 183-228; and Klapisch-Zuber, “Blood Parents and Milk Parents: Wet Nursing in Florence, 1300-1530,” in *Women, Family and Ritual*, 132–64.

¹³⁸ Gaspare Nadi, *Diario bolognese di Gaspare Nadi*, ed. Corrado Ricci and A. Bacchi della Lega (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1969), 42-43 and 51.

1552 includes a balance owing to one Lorenzo, “nostro balio”, the husband of the family’s wet nurse. Perhaps one of Troilo’s sons or a daughter was away at the wet nurse or had recently returned to the family’s home near the Porta Saragozza.¹³⁹ Finally, Camillo Gozzadini, from one of the most illustrious families in Bologna, recorded sending his son, Gian Battista, to the wet nurse a few days after he was born in 1584.¹⁴⁰

Although families of different social ranks employed wet nurses for their children, their reasons for doing so could be quite different. Because of the contraceptive properties of breastfeeding and the belief that intercourse spoiled breast milk, sexual relations and thus pregnancy were less-likely for nursing mothers.¹⁴¹ For elite families that could afford to support a greater number of children, it was disadvantageous for wives to be unavailable for childbearing, making hiring a wet nurse a desirable option; however, as Christian Klapisch-Zuber has highlighted, the employment of wet nurses also gave mothers a break from nursing and childcare during what, for some, would have been a continuous cycle during their most fertile years.¹⁴² Additionally, bringing a nurse into the home was much more costly than sending an infant to live with a nurse and her husband, and so could be a symbol of status and wealth.¹⁴³ For more humble families, sending an infant to a wet nurse could provide childcare and allow mothers to attend to domestic tasks or other kinds of work that might be a necessary source of income.¹⁴⁴ Some wet nurses even made a small profit by charging wealthy families for their services, while paying less to other women to feed and care for their own children.¹⁴⁵

Notably, whether or not a mother was physically able to feed her own child seems to have rarely been a contributing factor in the decision to hire a wet nurse, to the ire of contemporary doctors and moralists. Mothers were advised to nurse their own children not only because it was the practice of even “brutish animals”,¹⁴⁶ but also because it was believed that infants inherited qualities and characteristics from their milk. Several authors of household treatises use the example of kids drinking sheep’s

¹³⁹ The social status of Troilo di Bolelli is unclear. He is not a citizen, but an inhabitant of Bologna, and is not described with a title such as *maestro* or *signore*. ASB, *Notarile*, Francesco Nobili, 6/1 (1551-1556), f. 178, 12 October 1552 (Troilo di Bolelli) (no pagination).

¹⁴⁰ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 123.

¹⁴¹ Bell, 140.

¹⁴² Klapisch-Zuber, “Blood Parents”, 159.

¹⁴³ Klapisch-Zuber, “Blood Parents”, 136.

¹⁴⁴ Klapisch-Zuber, “Blood Parents”, 137-138.

¹⁴⁵ Klapisch-Zuber, “Blood Parents”, 138.

¹⁴⁶ Giovanni Leonardi notes crows as one of the “animali bruti”, (*Institutione di una famiglia christiana* (Rome, 1591), 25), but other authors use female tigers in their examples. See the summary in Bell, 128-9.

milk and lambs drinking that of goats, resulting in each animal taking on the distinctive coat of its nurse.¹⁴⁷ In addition to physical characteristics, habits and customs were also thought to be inherited through a nurse's milk. As Silvio Antoniano explains, "often the infant suckles along with milk the vices and defects of the nurse, such as irascibility, drunkenness, drowsiness, stupidity and other similar qualities."¹⁴⁸ More serious were the health implications that could be caused by problems with milk, because, as Dolce explains, "upon the health of the wet nurse the health of the infant depends".¹⁴⁹ The sixteenth-century physician Scipione Mercurio offered many home remedies for poor-quality breast milk and the various ailments it was said to cause. These were typically linked to a nurse's diet, and could stop the infant from developing as it should or resulted in more serious issues such as illness and even death.¹⁵⁰

Just as the quality of a nurse's milk posed risks to nursing infants, there were dangers associated with weaning. Changing a child's diet from one based solely on breast-milk to solid foods without a transition period or doing so too early could cause serious problems.¹⁵¹ It was recommended that weaning begin between eighteen months and two years of age, but could start earlier if a wet nurse became ill, pregnant or otherwise unavailable. Additionally, the longer a child was in the care of a nurse, the greater the financial cost; therefore, families with more money could afford to employ a wet nurse for longer periods of time than those of lesser means. Gender could also be a determining factor in the age at which a child was weaned and returned to their family. Because girls were thought to have a wet and cold humoural complexion, it was believed they could generally begin eating solid foods earlier and with fewer risks than their warm, dry brothers.¹⁵² Whether or not this was related to how much care or interest parents had in their daughters versus sons, as some scholars have argued,¹⁵³ or was

¹⁴⁷ "Et è cosa vera, che'l capretto nudrito del latte della pecora, crea i peli del naturale piu teneri: et all'incontro l'agnello se è nudrito dalla capra, gli fa piu duri." Dolce, *Dialogo*, 9^r. Also see, for example, Leonardi, 26.

¹⁴⁸ "...percioche è cosa manifesta per esperienza, che molto spesso la creatura sugge col latte i vitii, & difetti della nutrice, come la iracondia, la ebrietà, la sonnolentia, & stupidità, & altri simili." Silvio Antoniano, *Tre Libri Dell'educatione Christiana Dei Figliuoli* (Verona, 1584), 21a.

¹⁴⁹ "... atteso, che dalla sanità della Balia dipende anchora la sanità della fanciulla", Dolce, *Dialogo*, 10^r.

¹⁵⁰ For a summary of these remedies, see Bell, 139-145. For an example as described in Florentine family correspondence, see Megan Moran, "Motherhood and the Politics of Family Decisions in Early Modern Italy," *Journal of Family History* 40, no. 3 (July 1, 2015): 351-72; 363.

¹⁵¹ Klapisch-Zuber, "Blood Parents", 155.

¹⁵² Bell, 145.

¹⁵³ Klapisch-Zuber has argued both that, girls returned from the wet nurse sooner than their brothers because of less parental concern with their well-being ("Blood Parents", 155) but also that they stayed longer with wet nurses because, "[a] girl's life and physical development was deemed of lesser

based upon beliefs about their physiology, gender was a consideration in determining in the age at which a child was weaned. Thus, the nourishment of small children was intertwined with their gender and social class, which reinforced differences between boys and girls, and poor and elite families from the first few days of life. These differences became even more pronounced as children began to eat solid foods.

As mentioned above, social class was a key factor in determining what a person ate in this period. In part, this was related to wealth, with some types of food unaffordable for much of the population, but more important was the relationship between the hierarchies of the social and natural worlds. As Allen Grieco has demonstrated, to the early modern mind it was natural and even necessary for those of the upper classes to eat more refined foods than their social inferiors. This was not only because of perceived differences in digestion, but because consuming superior food actually maintained the perceived superiority of the elite.¹⁵⁴ Thus, veal, capon and fruit were appropriate to the nobly born whereas mutton and vegetables were best suited to merchants, for example.

In addition to social class, age was an important factor in determining what a person could or should eat. Many texts recommend simple foods be provided to children, as they were easier to prepare and digest, especially for very young children being weaned. Thus, for youngsters around 18 months to 3 years, authors suggest parents avoid offering heavy or coarse foods and forbid pure wine.¹⁵⁵ Serving only simple foods was also a means by which fussiness, a problem that contemporary writers identify in the population more generally,¹⁵⁶ could be prevented from early on. As Antoniano notes, “one must not give to children all that they want, nor as much as they want [to eat]”.¹⁵⁷ Additionally, instead of the fruit and sweet things that children craved, and that were thought to cause illnesses, parents were advised to serve their children very simple meals and snacks, such as apples and bread.¹⁵⁸ This is similar to dietary advice for adults as well, who were told to aim for moderation in both food and drink.¹⁵⁹

importance” (“Childhood in Tuscany at the Beginning of the Fifteenth Century,” in *Women, Family and Ritual*, 94–116; 105).

¹⁵⁴ Grieco, “Food”, 307.

¹⁵⁵ For example see Alessandro Piccolomini, *De la institutione di tutta la vita de l’huomo nato nobile e in città libera* (Venice, 1545), 22v; Mercurio, *La Commare*, 96; Leonardi, 27.

¹⁵⁶ Antoniano, 131a.

¹⁵⁷ “... atteso che non si deve dare à i fanciulli ne tutto quello che vogliono, ne quanto vogliano. Sono i fanciulli voraci, amici de’ frutti, & di cose dolci, le quali date loro soperchiamente non solo gli avvezzano giotti, ma spesse volte cagionano infirmità.” Antoniano, 131a.

¹⁵⁸ Antoniano, 131a.

¹⁵⁹ For a summary of this literature, see Cavallo and Storey, 209-39.

These of course were recommendations, and it is very difficult to know if or to what degree they were followed by parents; however, bread was a staple of the early modern diet, including for very young children, as just noted, and prepared in many Bolognese households, as indicated by domestic inventories. For instance, Domenico Fieravanti, Alberto Zanolini and Camillo Caccianemici, a shoemaker, notary and patrician respectively, each had several containers of flour and even loaves of bread in their homes, though likely of varying qualities.¹⁶⁰ Meat, too, seems to have been prepared in Bolognese households of different social classes;¹⁶¹ many of the inventories considered here include tools for roasting, boiling, dressing and preserving meat and fish, and, less often, cuts and slabs of meat.¹⁶² For instance, Maestro Francesco di Persici, a barber, had “two meat spits” in his home following his death in 1555,¹⁶³ while the notary, Bartolomeo Rota had just one large spit.¹⁶⁴ Over 30 years later, the home of the knight, Ludovico Caccialupi, featured a total of seven spits for roasting well as other tools for preparing meat.¹⁶⁵ Although the inventories considered here rarely note which type of meat the cooking tools are intended for, as Grieco has argued, different animals were seen to be appropriate for those of different social classes, with veal at the top of the quadruped hierarchy and pork and “old animals” at the bottom.¹⁶⁶

As with meat, there was a hierarchy of poultry with some birds nobler than others; however, for the most part the consumption of this type of food was limited to the elite.¹⁶⁷ The household inventories considered here place poultry only in patrician homes. For instance the inventory of Count Filippo Manzoli's home includes, “a cage with twelve capons”,¹⁶⁸ perhaps intended for the consumption of his wife, Lucia, who

¹⁶⁰ “Im uno arcila da farina d legno dolce col tri marlti li da piu dentro et col treno de pan[;] Im un archa da farina d legno dolce[;] Im uno sacho col uno staro d farina d cuoio... Im una grama da pan”, Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti). “Una cassa da farina grande vechia di legno dolce co 20 corbe de farina dentro”, Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 4v; “una archa da farina”, Notaio Sigurani (Caccianemici).

¹⁶¹ Hohti, “Domestic Space”, 375-77. In contrast, Renata Ago and Sandra Cavallo have found very little indication of baking and roasting meat in early modern inventories of Roman and Genovese artisans' homes, respectively. See Renata Ago, *Gusto for Things: A History of Objects in Seventeenth-Century Rome*, trans. Bradford Bouley and Corey Tazzara (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 98 and Cavallo, “Artisan's casa”, 75.

¹⁶² For example, “six pieces of dried pork” are noted in the inventory of Count Filippo Manzoli's home in 1560 (Notaio Nobili (Manzoli)). This was perhaps for the consumption of his servants, however, as Allen Grieco has demonstrated, different types of meat were appropriate for different social classes. See his, “Food”, 311.

¹⁶³ “dui spedi da carno”, ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1551-1559), 9 January 1555 (Francesco di Persici) (no pagination). On barber-surgeons, see Sandra Cavallo's *Artisans of the Body*.

¹⁶⁴ “una spediera Granda”, Notaio Rota (Rota).

¹⁶⁵ “Speti tre grandi per l'Arosto et quattro piccoli”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 354^v.

¹⁶⁶ Grieco, “Social Classes”, 311.

¹⁶⁷ Cavallo and Storey, 210.

¹⁶⁸ “Una gaiba con 12 caponi”, Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

was pregnant at the time. Capons were also part of the rent paid to Ludovico Caccialupi for use of the workshops on the same property as his country villa.¹⁶⁹ Thus food could be a component of economic exchange, as well as part of maintaining good health.¹⁷⁰

If poultry was limited to the elite, wine, like flour, could be found in a wider range of Bolognese households. For instance, returning to the shoemaker Domenico Fieravanti's home, there were seven different sized jugs filled with various types of wine stored in his *cantina*, or cellar in 1573.¹⁷¹ When he died in 1558, Camillo Caccianemici's household also featured a great deal of wine, including almost thirty vessels of different sizes filled with wine, "for drinking at home".¹⁷² The presence of wine in homes where children were living does not mean that they consumed this beverage; however, contemporary medical and household treatises suggest it was common, and even acceptable in some cases to give children watered wine. Although some writers advised parents not to allow their children, and especially their daughters,¹⁷³ to drink, as Dolce explains, "[he] cannot condemn the use of wine," with it being common practice for both sexes to imbibe.¹⁷⁴ He and others advise that those drinking wine, particularly women and children, do so in moderation.¹⁷⁵

Household inventories and other sources indicate that although there were class-based differences in terms of type or quality of food and drink, many Bolognese homes were equipped to sustain residents with at least bread, meat and wine. The ways in which food and drink were consumed, however, differed between households of elite and more humble families. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 1, there was only one table in the Fieravanti household, suggesting meals were consumed in "the chamber

¹⁶⁹ "al Palazzo ci sono due Botteghe una di fabro l'altra di mastro di legname che l'affittano libre trenta l'una et un para di capponi", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 349^v.

¹⁷⁰ On this subject see Peter Scholliers and Allen J. Grieco, "Food Exchanges in History: People, Products, and Ideas (IEHCA's European Summer University, 2008): Introduction," *Food and History* 7, no. 1 (January 2009): 105–9.

¹⁷¹ "uno vasello d corbo 6 in 7 pieni di vino piccolo negro puro[;] Im uno vasello corbo 7 e mezo pieni d vini bianco puro[;] Im uno vasello d corbo 4 - cinq pieni d vino negro piccolo puro no 1[;] Im uno vasello d corbe 8 in circa pieno d moschiato negro no 1[;] Im uno vaseleto d corbo 2 del vini negro no 1[;] Im uno vaseleto di meza corba no 1[;] Im uno vasello d corba 3 in circa pieni d moschiato no 1", Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti).

¹⁷² "la cantina dal vino vaseli sedici di varit corbi dove che nel numero venti uno di due corbi pien di vin puro et uno di otto corbi pieno il quali e, amano, a uso di beversi in cassa... cantina dal vino vaseli sedici di vari corbi dove che nel numero veni uno di due corbi pien di vin puro et uno di otto corbi pieno il quali e, amano, a uso di beversi in casa", Notaio Sigurani (Caccianemici).

¹⁷³ Notably, Antoniano, 134a.

¹⁷⁴ "L'uso del vino non lo posso dannare, essendo hoggi di commune all'un sesso & all'altro." Dolce, *Dialogo*, 27^r.

¹⁷⁵ Dolce, *Dialogo*, 27^r; also see Leonardi, 154. Although Antoniano advises moderation with respect to the consumption of wine, he argues that female children should completely abstain, and gives Saint Monica as an exemplar of sobriety. Antoniano, 134a.

above the cellar”.¹⁷⁶ In contrast, the home of Bartolomeo Rota, the notary, featured a number of tables and it seems meals could be taken in the kitchen, bedchamber, corridor or other spaces.

Children may have eaten before or after adults in the household, as authors recommended that children eat with other children, and only after a certain age be gradually introduced to dining at the table with other family members.¹⁷⁷ Silvio Antoniano, for example, suggests that children be invited to come and read at the table during mealtimes, but then be sent away.¹⁷⁸ Regardless of the age or duration of the child's stay during mealtimes, authors agree that they must behave well and show respect, neither “making deformed faces”,¹⁷⁹ nor eating and drinking like an animal.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, eating together as a family offered opportunities for children to learn proper etiquette. According to Antoniano, “the table of the prudent father will be like a school, and a daily exercise of virtue and many good manners.”¹⁸¹ Especially as children got older, food or even meals could be given as a reward for those who went to school or recited a lesson well.¹⁸²

Ideally then, meal times offered an opportunity not just to nourish the body, but for teaching children manners and rewarding them for good behaviour. The manners that one needed to learn, along with where, how and what one ate were all determined by social class and, to a lesser extent, age and gender. And, the differences with respect to diet could be made apparent from the first few days of a child's life. Wealthy families might have a wet nurse come to live at their home, where her activity and diet could be monitored, while the child of a stonemason might be sent to the countryside to live with a nurse. Noble girls might be weaned sooner than their brothers, but later than boys from more humble families. And, the food they consumed, the manners they needed to learn and the environment in which they did so, were different from their social inferiors. Just as social class, age and gender governed what, how and where a person

¹⁷⁶ The inventory lists, “una tavoletta d nuso co li piedi” in the “camino disopra sopra la cantina”, Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti).

¹⁷⁷ See Antoniano, 132b and Leonardi, 62 and 154.

¹⁷⁸ Antoniano, 133a.

¹⁷⁹ Antoniano explains: “...mangi con modestia non voracemente, non faccia atti deformi, ne co’l corpo, ne co’l viso, ne con la bocca, ne in altro modo, ò sia mangiando, ò sia bevendo” (132b).

¹⁸⁰ Leonardi, 62-3.

¹⁸¹ “In somma, come io dissi da principio, la mensa del prudente padre di famiglia sarà come una scuola, & uno esercitio quotidiano di virtù, & di molte buone creanze.” Antoniano, 133a.

¹⁸² Antoniano, 135a.

might eat, these were also factors that determined the kinds of activities one might engage in to assist with digestion and remove waste from the body.

2.2. Exercising the Body

According to humoural theory, exercise assisted with digestion and the distribution of nutrients, which helped maintain good health. Exercise was also believed to be a means by which excess waste created inside the body could be expelled: with increased respiration the pores opened and dangerous waste, or “excrement”, could be purged as sweat and vapours.¹⁸³ The ways in which this might be achieved, or the appropriate kinds of exercise a person might engage in, were determined by age, gender and social class.¹⁸⁴ As with food, different kinds of movements and gestures were appropriate for different kinds of bodies. And, it seems that elite households were more likely to feature objects related to exercise, than those of their social inferiors.

In this period it was believed that during birth, infants took heat from their mothers’ bodies and this needed to be expelled to maintain humoural balance. But babies and small children were seen to be delicate and easily exhausted and so exercise, the means by which excess heat was best expelled, needed to be gentle and supervised by a caregiver. In the opinion of contemporary medical and childrearing treatise writers, simple activities such as bathing and rocking in a cradle were considered appropriate exercises for infants.¹⁸⁵ Alessandro Piccolomini, recommended, for instance, that at bath time a nurse move and massage her charge's limbs or encourage the child to do so on its own. This also offered an opportunity to examine and feel the infant's arms and legs, ensuring they were growing in strong and straight.¹⁸⁶ Additionally, Mercurio suggested that after feeding, nurses hold infants in their arms or place them in the cradle and rock them, but gently so as not to disturb the milk in their bellies.¹⁸⁷ Extant cradles as well as representations of them from this period, discussed in Section 5, show many

¹⁸³ Cavallo and Storey, 145.

¹⁸⁴ Cavallo and Storey, 146.

¹⁸⁵ Arcangeli, 21.

¹⁸⁶ Piccolomini, 22^v-23^r

¹⁸⁷ Mercurio, *La Commare*, 96. On rocking and other passive exercises, also see Arcangeli, 21; Louis Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children: Childbirth and Early Childhood in Florence, 1300-1600* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 128; Cavallo and Storey, 151; Bell, 146.

seem to have been designed to rock, suggesting this was a common practice to both exercise and soothe infants.¹⁸⁸

Objects were also used to engage small children in looking and listening as a means of helping them to exercise their bodies and develop coordination. For instance, rattles could be used to focus infants' attention and, as they developed, to provide entertainment and exercise. These toys seem to have often combined talismanic objects, such as coral or animal teeth, with items like whistles or bells, as in the drawing in figure 2.1.¹⁸⁹ With a long handle on the rattle, the child could practice gripping as well as moving their hand and arm to sound the bells, as in the Florentine portrait in figure 2.2. Blowing a whistle, like that included as part of the rattle in figure 2.1 would take much more coordination, but perhaps a parent or nurse would intervene to entertain the child and exercise their listening skills. As is discussed below, listening to different sounds, and especially music, was not only enjoyable and soothing, but was thought to exercise the ears. Rattles in figures 2.1 and 2.2 appear ornate and of expensive materials such as silver, suggesting they were affordable only to the wealthy. There are no rattles listed in the inventories considered here, but, as Alessandro Arcangeli has pointed out, there were many forms of exercise and activity that required little or no equipment.¹⁹⁰ This seems especially true for very small children, for whom even crying was thought to be a good form of exercise, at least in short bursts.¹⁹¹

As they got older, children would begin to move more independently, learning to roll and crawl, expending energy and expelling heat. At around nine to ten months of age they might begin to learn how to walk, first holding and moving around pieces of furniture and then taking a few steps between them.¹⁹² Once their legs were sturdy enough, parents or caregivers might implement a walker and perhaps even a fabric helmet to protect small children's heads from bumps and falls.¹⁹³ The portrait of Francesca Caterina of Savoy in figure 2.3 (1597), for instance, shows the young girl contained within a rectangular structure, though it is unclear whether it is intended to help her or prevent her from walking. Agostino Carracci's drawing, *The Old Man and*

¹⁸⁸ Ajmar, "Geography", 78. On different kinds of rocking cradles see Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 253-57.

¹⁸⁹ Musacchio, "Lambs", 153; *ibid.*, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 204; Suzy P.A. Knight, "Zacchere da donna: The Material Culture of Female Belief and Maternal Memory in Florence, c.1420-1550" (Doctoral Thesis, Queen Mary, University of London, 2010), 116; Klapisch-Zuber, "Blood Parents", 149-150.

¹⁹⁰ Arcangeli, 106.

¹⁹¹ Cavallo and Storey, 146-8.

¹⁹² Bell, 147.

¹⁹³ Bell, 150; Fortini Brown, "Children", 140; Ajmar, "Geography", 78-9.

the Courtesan (fig. 2.4), also shows a device perhaps meant to help a child learn to stand but to keep it immobile. In the background of the image, a small child is about to tip over in a funnel-shaped basket as it reaches for a ball or piece of fruit on the ground. Cristoforo Bertelli's engraving of the phases of the male life-cycle shows, as the earliest stage, a young boy in a walker (fig. 2.5),¹⁹⁴ but the wheels on this object make it clearer it is intended to assist the child with learning to walk. Finally, Ognibene Ferrari's Latin text, *De arte medica infantium* (1577) includes illustrations showing a child in quite a simple, wheeled-walker and wearing headgear to protect it from bumps and falls (figs. 2.6 - 2.7).¹⁹⁵ Although none of these images are direct reflections of life, they incorporate details and objects that exist today.¹⁹⁶ For instance, the baby-walker, or *girello*, in the Museo Bagatti Valsecchi in Milan (fig. 2.8), which is similar to those found in the images, suggests families may have employed these tools to help their children learn to walk. This example is made of walnut and carved with details such as vines and swaddled infants, suggesting it originally belonged in a wealthy household.¹⁹⁷

For those that could not afford or chose not to purchase or borrow walkers, domestic furnishings might be employed to help children keep their balance and learn to walk. For instance, the sketch of a poor household attributed to Annibale Carracci (fig. 2.9), shows a child and an older man seated on low stools and a table in the lower right corner. Youngsters could employ these kinds of furnishings as they learned to stand and take their first steps. Although Carracci's drawing does not necessarily depict a real household, inventories also locate similarly simple furnishing in modest homes. For instance, the only piece of furniture in the small trousseau belonging to Camilla Guidetti, who worked as a household servant, was a fir chest.¹⁹⁸ While its primary function would have been to carry her trousseau goods to her husband's home when she was married in 1598, it could also have doubled as a surface for her future children to hold onto while learning to walk, and later as flat surface for play, among other purposes.

Once children, and especially boys, were mobile, contemporary writers advised they be allowed to run, jump and play with others. As Piccolomini suggests, between

¹⁹⁴ For a history of the inclusion of baby-walkers in these and other types of images, see Langmuir, 113-136 and Ajmar, "Geography", 79.

¹⁹⁵ Ferrari, 58-59.

¹⁹⁶ Erika Langmuir, *Imagining Childhood* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2006), 127.

¹⁹⁷ Fortini Brown, *Private Lives*, 96.

¹⁹⁸ "una cassa d'habedo", ASB, *Notarile Pietro Zanettini*, 6/2 (1555-1605), 9 January 1598 (Dos D. Camilla) (no pagination).

the ages of three and five years the nobly born boy should take part in delightful sports and pleasing games, though not so that he became too tired.¹⁹⁹ At this age social class seems to become a more prominent factor in determining appropriate activities and playmates. Piccolomini explains that boys' childhood games should take place under a mother's supervision and with children of a similar age, nobility and upbringing. "Above all", he advises, "[noble boys] should not intervene nor mix amongst servants, slaves or other vile persons".²⁰⁰ As Antoniano notes, these games and exercises should take place in some remote *sala* or the courtyard within the family *palazzo*, far from sisters or other female children.²⁰¹ Boys that lived in more modest homes might have taken their games to the city's streets and *piazze*, rather than private courtyards.²⁰²

Moralists also advised that girls also play with children of the same age, gender and station. Ludovico Dolce, for example, recommended that mothers, nurses or other "mature and honest women" oversee young girls' games and that they only be played with other female children; even conversing with boys could foster inappropriate relationships.²⁰³ Despite moralists' recommendations to keep male and female children separate, brothers and sisters likely played together or at least within the same spaces. Especially in smaller, more humble homes where there was not enough space to keep boys and girls separate, they may have taught prayers to younger siblings or played together. A Bolognese children's psalter, for instance, instructs the reader: "[t]o your younger sisters and brothers, teach the Pater Noster, Ave Maria [and] Apostle's Creed".²⁰⁴

There may also have been more formal games that boys and girls played together. As Sandra Cavallo and Tessa Storey note, *piccola palla* or "small ball", a game that grew in popularity from the late Middle Ages, may have attracted both male and female players.²⁰⁵ Although the inventories considered here do not refer to objects

¹⁹⁹ Piccolomini, 25^r.

²⁰⁰ "[E] sopra tutto, non intervenghin e non si meschino trà loro, nè servi, nè schiavi, nè altre persone vili", Piccolomini, 25^v.

²⁰¹ "Et per tanto dove nelle case proprie si ha commodità di alcuna sala remota, overo di giardini & simili luoghi aperti, giudico che nostri figliuole di famiglia molto commodamente vi si portranno ricreare, & meno havranno occasione di mescolarsi con altri fanciulli, che forse portrebbono no essere allevati con la medesima disciplina, alla qual cosa, come ad altri propositi si è ricordato, si deve haver sempre non mediocre riguardo." Antoniano, 155a.

²⁰² See for example see Ottavia Niccoli, "Compagnie di bambini nell'italia del Rinascimento," *Rivista storica italiana* 101 (1989): 346–74; *ibid.*, *Il seme*; *ibid.*, "Rituals of Youth".

²⁰³ Dolce, *Dialogo*, 12^r.

²⁰⁴ "Alle vostre sorelle & fratelli minori insegnarete il Pater noster, Ave Maria, il Credo", *Psalterio*, 14^v.

²⁰⁵ Cavallo and Storey, 165.

involved in *piccola palla*, such as balls and gloves,²⁰⁶ one patrician family, the Caccialupi, possessed a number of items related to ball games. The inventory of their country villa from 1588 lists: “a game of *palla in terra*: four mallets with dishes[?][;] six wooden balls[;] *pallamagli* [or mallets], wrought in iron and two balls”.²⁰⁷ It is unclear whether these items were for two separate games, *palla in terra* and *pallamaglio*, or just one. The latter was an early hybrid of golf and croquet, where players hit balls through hoops using mallets, sometimes over long distances. As it was not strenuous, the game was recommended as a gentle form of exercise, perhaps appropriate to country living.²⁰⁸ *Palla in terra*, however, remains a mystery, if it was indeed a separate game. From the items in the inventory, it seems to also have been played with mallets and, judging from the name, on the ground, and with the *scudele* or “dishes”, it was perhaps similar to lawn bowling or skittles. In 1588 when this inventory was drawn up, Ludovico Caccialupi had three sons between the ages of 8 and 20, as well as a 16-year-old daughter living at home.²⁰⁹ Perhaps the children played these games together with friends and other family members during stays at the villa in Maccaretolo, midway between Bologna and Ferrara.

The seventeenth-century physician Gabriele Fonseca described *pallamaglio* and hunting with a crossbow as activities safe for everyone,²¹⁰ and, notably, the Caccialupi family also had objects for riding and hunting, at their homes in both Bologna and Maccaretolo. These items included riding cushions and cloaks, a horse crupper, stirrups, saddles, hunting knives and firearms, along with five horses and two colts.²¹¹ When he died in 1560, Count Filippo Manzoli also had many goods related to riding in his *palazzo*, including a coverlet for a horse, riding breeches and a riding cloak, as well as two horses and a colt.²¹² As noted above, there were three male children in the

²⁰⁶ Cavallo and Storey, 164.

²⁰⁷ “Un gioco da Palla in terra: magli co le scudelle quattro[;] palle di legno sei[;] pallamagli ferrati uno con palle n° 2” Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 359^v.

²⁰⁸ Cavallo and Storey, 166 and Arcangeli, 22. On ball games in the city, and among university students, see Grendler, “Fencing”, 295-319.

²⁰⁹ Carl’ Antonio, Giovanni and Cesare’s ages are known from the inventory (Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 347^v) and Laura’s from Bologna’s baptismal register (Archivio Arcivescovile (hereafter AArc), *Registri Battesimali*, 1571-1573, v. 28, 209^v). Ludovico Caccialupi also had at least three other daughters, who, by 1588 were already living in convents in Bologna (Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 363^r).

²¹⁰ Cavallo and Storey, 151 and Arcangeli, 22.

²¹¹ For a complete list of arms and armour at the family’s home in Bologna see Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 358^r-358^v and at the villa see 359^v and 360^v.

²¹² “Un tabarro novo de panno negro listato di veluto e fodrato dalli lati di raso”; “Una copertina da cavallo vecchia”; “Un paro de calze rosse da cavalcare”, ASB, Notarile, Francesco Nobili (1558-1560), 6/1, 3 February 1560 (Manzoli).

Caccialupi family, and Manzoli had one young son and another on the way when he died.²¹³ Although none of these instances describe the weapons or riding clothes as being for use by children, riding and hunting were thought to be appropriate kinds of exercise for noble young men. Piccolomini, for instance, describes riding as “a most honourable exercise”, suggesting well-born boys begin to learn this skill between the ages of 10 and 14.²¹⁴ These activities were important beyond their physical benefits. Hunting, for instance, was in some ways a rite of passage, or as Alessandro Arcangeli has described, “a practice charged with the educational function of offering a young aristocrat the occasion to prove his worth, his right to belong to his social group.”²¹⁵ Boys might begin to participate in hunting from about fourteen, though very vigorous activity was to be avoided until the age of twenty-one or so.²¹⁶

Music was also considered a means by which the body and mind could be exercised, and was much less physically demanding than riding or hunting. Listening to different sounds, for instance, was thought to exercise the ears and singing was a means of working the lungs and chest.²¹⁷ Additionally, certain types of music were also thought to be calming and lift the spirits of all ages, from lullabies to “devout little songs”.²¹⁸ It was recommended that children, particularly boys, begin to practice music around age seven,²¹⁹ as a means of recreation, devotion and learning good comportment, but also as an outlet for excess energy. As Piccolomini explains, giving boys a musical instrument such as a drum, “upon which they never stop beating”, might save other objects around the house from being broken.²²⁰ Children did not necessarily need to become good singers or musicians, as Antoniano suggests, but music could be introduced within the family group as a sort of game. This would not only delight young children, both male and female, but also help them to commit psalms and other holy

²¹³ The preamble to the 1560 inventory describes “...Co: Octavio eius filio herede instituto et etiam ventre eius uxoris pregnante constituisse q ipsu Mag^{cu} D. Alphonsus tutore dicti sui filij...” Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

²¹⁴ Piccolomini, 60^v.

²¹⁵ Arcangeli, 90.

²¹⁶ Cavallo and Storey, 148-52.

²¹⁷ Cavallo and Storey, 149-50.

²¹⁸ “...alcune divote canzonette”, Antoniano, 157b. Also see Flora Dennis, “Music,” in *At Home*, 228–43; 235.

²¹⁹ Dennis, “Music”, 235.

²²⁰ “...la onde prudenteme[n]te doviamo dire, che facesse Archita, il quale per intertenimento de i fanciulli trovo loro un certo instrumento musicale, quasi in guisa di Tambura, dove percotendo i fanciulli che non san mai fermarsi, per cotal’occupatione, si levasse lor’ occasione di no[n] havere à rompere e guastar molte cose utili che sono in casa...” Piccolomini, 58^v-59^r.

songs to memory, which they could sing as they went about their daily tasks.²²¹ Although girls might learn to sing hymns and other devout songs, having them play instruments was seen as inappropriate by most moralists, as it often meant learning from male teachers and was a skill sometimes associated with courtesans.²²² Nevertheless, there were girls and young women who learned to play and sing.²²³ A musical education suggested elevated social status, both in reality and as part of a family's aspirations. Lavinia Fontana, for example, represented herself playing a keyboard instrument (fig. 2.10), perhaps influenced by Sofonisba Anguissola's *Self Portrait at the Clavichord* (1561). Fontana's portrait does not necessarily mean that she knew how to play the instrument, though as Caroline Murphy has demonstrated, letters written by the painter suggest she had some musical knowledge.²²⁴ This knowledge and skill might have better-positioned Fontana and other women in the marriage market, though girls destined for the convent might also be musically trained. As Craig Monson has found, some young women who excelled at playing or singing were allowed to enter musical convents with reduced dowries.²²⁵ For example, in 1592 and 1593 Elena and Laura Ferrabosco, of the famed musical Bolognese family, were accepted at convents with reduced dowries because of their skill as organists. Unfortunately, because Bolognese convents were so oversubscribed with musical talent, the girls were sent to Genoa.²²⁶

²²¹ "...ma si faccia la musica tra gli istessi famigliari di casa, non come cosa di grande apparato, ma per un giuoco, & trattenimento breve, non si cantino compositioni tali, ne rime, che possino accender l'animo di fuoco carnale, ma più presto salmi, & alcune divote canzonette, quali per opra de i padri della Congregatione dell'Oratorio di Roma, si stamparono non è gran tempo, che vi sono cose affettuose, & morali, che nutriscono lo spirito, & l'amor di Dio, & si possono cantar da pochi, & con mediocre intelligenza, & tali canzonette molto meglio, & più utilmente si possono imparar à mente da fanciulli, & domestici di casa, & anco dalle figliuole femine, per ricrearsi mentre fanno loro lavori, che le vane rime di romanzi, & altri componimenti amorosi..." Antoniano, 157b.

²²² Antoniano, 158a. Also see Dennis, "Music", 235-237.

²²³ For instance, see Moran, "Motherhood", 357; Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 85.

²²⁴ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 42. On this portrait also see Babette Bohn, "Female Self-Portraiture in Early Modern Bologna," *Renaissance Studies* 18, no. 2 (June 1, 2004): 239-86.

²²⁵ Craig A. Monson, "Families, Convents, Music: The Power of Sisterhood," in *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World: Sisters, Brothers and Others*, ed. Naomi Yavneh and Naomi J. Miller (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 40-52. There is a growing body of scholarship on music in convents. See, for instance, Kate Lowe, *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture: Women and History Writing in Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Craig Monson, *Disembodied Voices: Music and Culture in an Early Modern Italian Convent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); *ibid*, *Divas in the Convent Nuns, Music, and Defiance in Seventeenth-Century Italy*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Kimberlyn Montford, "Holy Restraint: Religious Reform and Nuns' Music in Early Modern Rome," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 37, no. 4 (2006): 1007-26; Gianna Pomata and Gabriella Zarri, eds., *I monasteri femminili come centri di cultura fra rinascimento e barocco* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2005).

²²⁶ Monson, "Families", 45-6. Also see *ibid*, "Ancora uno sguardo sulle suore musiciste di Bologna," in *I monasteri femminili come centri di cultura fra rinascimento e barocco*, ed. Gianna Pomata and Gabriella Zarri, 3-26 (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2005) and Carlo Vitali, "La scuola della virtù delle Zitelle: Insegnamenti e pratiche musicali fra Sei e Ottocento presso il Conservatorio degli Esposti di

Thus, both male and female children received musical training at home as a form of exercise, but also as a skill that might give them advantages in later in life. Little documentary evidence of this training, however, remains today. Additionally, household inventories often include instruments, but they rarely indicate if or by whom they were played.²²⁷ Consequently, it is difficult to connect children and music within Bolognese homes with much certainty; however, the example of the Manzoli family reveals the important role of music in childrearing and family life, at least in the context of an elite home. The inventory drawn up following the death of Count Filippo Manzoli in 1560 suggests he was the head of a musical household, with instruments such as a large harpsichord, a cittern, an organ and bass viols kept in various rooms throughout the *palazzo*.²²⁸ Although the inventory does not indicate by whom the instruments were played, there is evidence that the son born after Manzoli's death, also called Filippo, was involved in musical circles in Bologna (fig. 2.11). For instance, in his *Corona della nobiltà d'Italia* (1639), Giovanni Pietro de'Crescenzi Romani describes Filippo the Younger as having "devoted himself to music [and] in his own *palazzo* instituted a blossoming academy of nobility".²²⁹ Additionally, Girolamo Trombetti's book of madrigals printed in 1590 is dedicated to Filippo and the dedication in the frontispiece describes him as offering his home as shelter to all the musicians of the city.²³⁰ While his appreciation for music does not necessarily mean that Filippo the Younger learned to play, the kinds of instruments found within his family home in 1560 are those recommended by some moralists as appropriate for nobles. Piccolomini, for instance, praises the harpsichord and cittern as instruments for noble young men to learn, once they had advanced beyond beating on a drum.²³¹

The types of instruments found in the Manzoli household were associated with elite education programmes and civility, but they may also have been important to the family's identity and relationships. Filippo the Younger's paternal grandfather, Alessandro Manzoli, hosted Alessandro and Ottavio and later Ranuccio Farnese,

Bologna," in *I Bastardini: Patrimonio e memoria di un ospedale bolognese*, 105-137 (Bologna: Edizioni AGE, 1990).

²²⁷ Dennis, "Music", 232. Also see *ibid*, "When is a Room a Music Room? Sounds, Spaces, and Objects in Non-Courtly Italian Interiors," in *The Music Room in Early Modern France and Italy: Sound, Space, and Object*, ed. Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 37-49.

²²⁸ The inventory lists: "Un chiavacembalo", "Una chitarra", "Un organo" and "Un paro di casse da Violoni". Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

²²⁹ Crescenzi, 529.

²³⁰ Girolamo Trombetti, *Il primo libro de madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice, 1590).

²³¹ Piccolomini, 58^f.

grandsons of Pope Paul III, in his home while they were being educated in Bologna (fig. 2.12 & 2.13).²³² Alessandro and Ottavio Farnese, alongside Gabriele, Camillo and Astorre Paleotti reportedly studied music together under Domenico Maria Ferrabosco,²³³ and perhaps Alessandro Manzoli's son, Filippo the Elder, also took part in these lessons.

Although the elder Filippo died some time before his son was born, he may have left instructions for his children's upbringing and musical education with their grandfather on their mother's side, the senator Alfonso Fantuzzi, who was named their *tutore* in 1560.²³⁴ Alfonso Fantuzzi (fig. 2.14), along with his brothers, had been educated at the Serravalle School of the celebrated humanist Giovanni Antonio Flamino (1464-1536),²³⁵ and Alfonso's son, Ferdinando Fantuzzi (1546-1600), was known as a great collector of art in Bologna.²³⁶ Finally, although little is known about the upbringing and education of Alfonso's daughter, Lucia, Manzoli's second wife and the mother of Filippo the Younger, she may well have influenced his interest in music, too.²³⁷ In all likelihood, it was a combination of these and other factors that shaped Filippo the Younger's devotion to music, which he in turn may have passed onto his own children. His son, Alessandro, for instance, is said to have shown musical genius from birth, continuing the work of his father and even building a cypress wood organ with his own hands.²³⁸

As this example demonstrates, learning about, listening to and playing music was not just a means of physical or intellectual exercise, but could be a way of sharing knowledge and skill, creating familial bonds and passing legacies from one generation to the next. But, playing music was considered to be exercise or recreation only for those who did not practice professionally and could be problematic for women and girls. Thus, participation in activities intended as exercise, leisure or recreation was not only based on but reinforced social, economic and, in some instance, gendered differences.

²³² Crescenzi, 527 and Dolfi, 517. Ottavio Farnese is not named by these two writers, however Craig Monson has demonstrated that he and Alessandro were in Bologna together. See Monson, "Composer", 8.

²³³ Monson, "Composer", 8.

²³⁴ See note 213 above.

²³⁵ *Art and love*, 120. See this entry also for information about Alfonso's father, Gaspare Fantuzzi.

²³⁶ Fabio Chiodini, "La collezione di Ferdinando Fantuzzi (1546-1600), 'Amico dei pittori': da Ercole de' Roberti al Civetta, da Giorgione al Cavazzoni," *Il carrobbio* 39 (2013): 29–42.

²³⁷ Monson, "Families", 40–52.

²³⁸ Crescenzi, 530.

2.3. Washing and Cleanliness

In this period, exercise was seen to be one of the ways in which impurities, or “excrement”, generated within the body, could be expelled as discussed in the previous section. The body also purged waste in other ways, which needed to be carefully monitored and controlled. “Excrements of the head”, for instance, considered dangerous because of the proximity to the brain, were purged through the eyes, ears, mouth and nose and were even expelled as hair.²³⁹ Urine and faeces were considered excrement, as they are today,²⁴⁰ but, in the sixteenth century, menstruation was also seen to be a means by which women expelled impurities, which “hotter” men purged by way of sweat. It was not enough to simply remove excrement from inside the body, but it also needed to be cleaned from the surface through washing, wiping and brushing.²⁴¹

Because of worries about the risks of exposure to cold, complete immersion in water, became, for the most part, uncommon in early modern Italy and instead people washed just parts of their bodies.²⁴² The objects related to this kind of washing, particularly ewers or jugs and basins, could be found in many Bolognese households. For instance, “a brass ewer” is listed in the inventory of the goods found in the home of the barber, Maestro Francesco Persici in 1555,²⁴³ while the notary, Bartolomeo Rota, owned a larger number of objects associated with washing. The inventory of his home from 1574 lists: “a pewter ewer[,] three maiolica ewers and two white maiolica basins”.²⁴⁴ Finally, the senatorial Bianchetti family had an even greater number of objects for washing, including sixteen sets of basins and ewers in materials such as brass, maiolica, enamelled bronze and silver and for purposes ranging from “hand washing” to “serving”.²⁴⁵

²³⁹ Cavallo and Storey, 240.

²⁴⁰ Cavallo and Storey, 241.

²⁴¹ Cavallo and Storey, 240.

²⁴² Cavallo and Storey, 250. As Stephanie Hanke has shown, domestic baths remained common in early modern Genoa. See her “Bathing All’antica: Bathrooms in Genoese Villas and Palaces in the Sixteenth Century,” *Renaissance Studies* 20, no. 5 (November 1, 2006): 674–700 and *ibid.*, “Bathing in Genoa,” in *At Home*, 222–23.

²⁴³ Notaio Sigurani (Persici).

²⁴⁴ “un bronzo d stagno” and “tri bronzi de maiolicha et dui bacili d maiolicha bianca et una salina in la camera”, Notaio Rota (Rota), 46^r.

²⁴⁵ “Tre Baccili d’ottone[:] uno da lavare le mani et due da fare li servilii” (3^r); “duoi bacili di smalto et bronzo” (3^v); “un bacile e bronzo d’argento” (3^v); “un bacile di castagno per maestro” (4^r); “un’ bronzo et un baccile d’ottone” (4^v); “un bronzo et bacile di smalto da lavare le mani” (4^v); “brocche e Cadini di maiolica da lavare le mani n° otto” (4^v). ASB, *Archivio Bianchetti*, Strumenti e scritture, lib. 2, f. 25 (1341-1596), 29 July 1581 (Inventario dell’Eredita del gia’ Sign^{re}: Senre Cesare Bianchetti), 1^r-6^v.

These objects were intended to pour and catch water as part of washing but, as the variety of materials suggest, could also demonstrate wealth and sociability.²⁴⁶ Contemporary images of noble feasts and banquets, for instance, often show large silver ewers and basins used to wash the hands of guests. Additionally, the description of Alessandra Carminali Bianchetti's lying-in chamber provided in the Introduction to this thesis, noted the display of, "a basin with a silver ewer on a trestle of the finest white maiolica".²⁴⁷ This was perhaps the same silver ewer and basin listed in the inventory drawn up of her husband, Cesare Bianchetti's household the year prior to the birth of their daughter.²⁴⁸ It is not clear if these objects were put to use during the visits that followed childbirth or were strictly for display; however, there is evidence that ewers and basins were employed in the care of mothers and infants immediately following childbirth. Medical texts, for instance, advised that new-borns be bathed following the tying-off and cutting of the umbilical cord.²⁴⁹ Contemporary images of birth and lying-in scenes also often show infants being washed with ewers and basins or bathed in large tubs of water. For instance, Guido Reni's *Birth of the Virgin* (1609-11; fig. 2.15) shows a woman pouring water from an ewer into a basin in the lower right corner, as well as another woman carrying a large tub, presumably also for water. An image after Bartolomeo Cesi's now severely damaged fresco in what was the Church of Santa Maria dei Bulgari in Bologna shows the new-born Virgin held over a large footed-bowl, being either washed or dried with a cloth (fig. 2.16). Additionally, *The Birth of the Virgin* by an unknown Bolognese painter shows the infant held in a large wooden tub by one woman while another pours water from a jug (fig. 2.17). Finally, Giovanni Battista Bertucci the Younger's *Birth of the Virgin* (1586) shows the moment before the new-born is washed in a large metal tub, with an older woman checking the water temperature with her bent index finger (fig. 2.18).²⁵⁰

These images are not true reflections of real domestic scenes and features such as pouring or testing the temperature of water may be what François Quiviger has termed "sensory prompts", intended to prepare viewers' minds for something that is to

²⁴⁶ On ewers and basins, see Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 103-5 and 244-245; Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 98-100; Ajmar-Wollheim, "Sociability", 206-21; Hugo Blake, "Everyday Objects," in *At Home*, 332-41; 338-40; Reino Liefkes, "Tableware," in *At Home*, 254-65; 255-57; Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 164-5; Cavallo and Storey, 257-60.

²⁴⁷ Frati, 24.

²⁴⁸ "Un bacile e bronzo d'argento", *Archivio Bianchetti*, f. 25 (Inventario), 3^v.

²⁴⁹ See Bell's summary of advice on postpartum care for mother and baby, pp. 119-23.

²⁵⁰ For a brief discussion of this work in relation to children and childbirth, see Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 186-88 and Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 98-100.

happen.²⁵¹ There are, however, striking similarities between the objects described in inventories, represented in images and extant examples in museum collections today. For instance, the pewter ewer and basin in Bologna's Museo Civico Medievale (figs. 2.19 & 2.20) closely resemble the set represented in a woodcut showing kitchen tools from Bartolomeo Scappi's sixteenth-century cookery book (fig. 2.21) as well as that in Reni's fresco (fig. 2.15). It makes good sense that an infant would be washed after birth using the objects that a family had on hand, whether a brass jug or a maiolica ewer, and it was recommended that they continue being bathed once a day in the summer and less so during the colder winter months.²⁵² As children got older, however, linens took on a more prominent role in personal hygiene, replacing frequent baths that were presumably easier to provide for babies, given their small size, and also necessary as a gentle form of exercise. Indeed, linen came into contact with hair and skin in the form of towels and cloths for drying, buffing and wiping the skin and hair,²⁵³ but as undergarments as well.

Linen undergarments became increasingly common in the sixteenth century, as they drew sweat, oil and smells from the body and could be changed and washed regularly. As is discussed in Section 4, most of the garments listed in household inventories as being specifically for use by children were personal linens such as undershirts. In fact, this is the garment that appears with the most frequency throughout the inventories considered here and, like ewers and basins, could be found in both humble and grand households, for children and adults. For instance, the Bolognese carpenter, Simone Tamburini, had in his home "twelve children's undershirts" alongside "eight undershirts for men" and personal linens for use by his daughters.²⁵⁴ The noble Manzoli household also featured a number of these undergarments, though many were of expensive materials and richly decorated. For instance, as is discussed in Chapter 3, the family possessed four women's undershirts embroidered with gold, silver and silk thread as well as one for a child decorated with green silk.²⁵⁵ These ornate and expensive pieces of clothing were likely for special events, such as lying-in visits, but the family also possessed simpler undergarments, presumably for everyday wear.²⁵⁶

²⁵¹ François Quiviger, *The Sensory World of Italian Renaissance Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010), 150.

²⁵² Mercurio, *La commare*, 96.

²⁵³ Cavallo and Storey, 250.

²⁵⁴ "Item otto camise da homo[,] Item dodeci camise da putti" and "Item piu biancharia aduso di dtte [figlie]" ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), 15 March 1589 (Simone Tamburini) (no pagination).

²⁵⁵ "Una camisa da putto lavorata di seda verde", Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

²⁵⁶ For instance, "Cinq camise da huomo et 7 da donna", Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

Despite the frequency with which undershirts appear in inventories, few survive today. Examples that we do have tend to be those of high quality linen, often with lacework and embroidery, as in figure 2.22. This linen undershirt or smock, now in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, features vegetal patterns, birds and geometric designs on the sleeves, along the neckline and lower hem embroidered in silk and metallic thread. The type and cost of the materials used to decorate this undergarment suggests it belonged to a woman from a wealthy family, and is perhaps similar to those worn by Filippo Manzoli's wife, Lucia and their children for special occasions. The undershirts worn by Simone Tamburini's children, however, were probably not so richly embellished, although few early modern examples of very simple undershirts survive today, images suggest what they may have looked like. For example, some of the men and women featured in Annibale Carracci's *Arti di Bologna*, a series of drawings depicting various professions in the city dated to the 1580s and printed by Simon Guilain in 1646, wear what were presumably quite ordinary garments. Carracci's *Un putto che urina* (fig. 2.23), for instance, shows a young man wearing only a very simple, long shirt. Similarly, the young woman in *Una putta che governa galline* (fig. 2.24) also wears a fairly plain set of clothes. As Maria Muzzarelli has suggested, for the very poor, an undershirt might be one of their few or only garments and so not changed and washed as often as those belonging to more affluent citizens.²⁵⁷

In addition to undershirts, there were other linens that had frequent contact with the body and were also changed and washed as often as possible. Handkerchiefs, for instance, were used to keep clean, as they are today, but also had social connotations and could be richly decorated.²⁵⁸ Although these objects are often associated with adult women by modern scholars, they were also used by or in the care of children. For instance, there are "four small, thin handkerchiefs for children" listed in an inventory of the Saraceni household from 1588.²⁵⁹ The handkerchiefs may have been tucked into a child's apron strings or other pieces of clothing, as in figure 2.25, or kept on their person when they were older. Similar to undershirts, handkerchiefs could be simple pieces of linen or richly ornamented with lace, cutwork and embroidery, depending on one's budget and need. Those represented in contemporary images and found in museum

²⁵⁷ On the dress of impoverished people, see Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba*, 75-9.

²⁵⁸ See for instance Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 30-32; Matthews Grieco, "Marriage and Sexuality", 104-5; *Art and Love*, 242; Will Fisher, "Handkerchiefs and Early Modern Ideologies of Gender," *Shakespeare Studies* 28 (2000): 199-207.

²⁵⁹ "quattro facioletti sotile piccoli da putti L0-16", ASB, *Notarile*, Tommaso Passarotti, 6/1 (1587-1588), 22 March 1588 (Valerio e Cesare Saraceni), 442^r-449^r, 442^v.

collections today are typically of the latter sort. The child in figure 2.25, for example, wears a large handkerchief edged with lace tucked into its apron strings, which is similar to the seventeenth-century example now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 2.26). This example, made of linen with silk and lace decoration, and others like it that are described in contemporary inventories and pictured in portraits would have had the practical function of keeping the body clean but also, especially because they were often visible accessories, displayed social status.²⁶⁰

Also important for keeping small children clean were nappies, which protected the outer layers of clothing from urine and faeces and were held in place by swaddling bands. Although these seem like quite necessary items and contemporary physicians recommended nappies be changed often for the health and comfort of the child, it is not entirely clear what they were in this period. This is, in part, due to issues around terminology. Treatises by physicians such as Lorenzo Gioberti and Scipione Mercurio, for instance, differentiate between *pezze* (nappies) and *fasce* (swaddling bands).²⁶¹ Although the latter corresponds with the terms used in Bolognese inventories for swaddling bands (usually *fassa*, *fasca* or *fascia*), which are found quite frequently, *pezze* are not. The only example, in fact appears in the inventory of the Saraceni household from 1588, which lists: “two *pezze* of bocasine for children[,] seven *panicelli* of different sorts” and “a *panicelino* of *ortighina* with white needlework”.²⁶² In this instance the *pezze* are of an expensive type of fabric, suggesting they are more likely to have been swaddling bands or cloths than nappies. *Panicelli* is a term found very frequently throughout the inventories considered here, not just in relation to children, and is defined in John Florio’s 1625 Italian-English dictionary as, “all manner of little clothes, clouts, or rags”.²⁶³ Thus the Saraceni *panicelli* may have been nappies, but the *panicelino* of *ortighina*, a fabric made of nettles, and decorated with needlework suggests this was some other sort of garment or perhaps an outer, ornate nappy for special occasions.

²⁶⁰ Fisher, 199–207.

²⁶¹ “Del mutare il bambino a tuttle l’hore, ch’egli e imbrattato,” in, Lorenzo Gioberti, *La prima parte de gli errori popolari*, translated from French by Alberto Luchi da Colle (Florence, 1592), 211–17. *Pezza* is also the term use by Scipione Mercurio in *De gli errori popolari* (Venice, 1603), 275^r. John Florio’s English-Italian dictionary, *Queen Anna’s New World of Words* (London, 1611), also defines a *pezza* as “any piece, patch, clout, ragge or tatter” (P. 375).

²⁶² The inventory lists: “un lenzoli da cuna di lino sotile L2” and “quatro facioletti da putti sottile picoli L-16[;] due pezze di Bucasino da putti L1[;] sette panicelli di piu sorte L28-19[;] un drappo di renza vecchio L4[;] una mantellina di renza achiopata di bianco L1[;] un panicelino d’ortighina lavorato di bianco L1”, Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 446^r-446^v.

²⁶³ Florio, 354.

Just as it is unclear with what infants were diapered, we know little about how they transition from nappies to using early modern versions of toilets. The authors of household and medical treatises had much to say on how parents and caregivers should nourish and dress children, but are mostly silent on the issue of toilet training. One exception, though, is Ognibene Ferrari's Latin text, *De arte medica infantium* (Brescia, 1577; fig. 2.27), which recommends a child be sat on a bench or chair with a hole in the seat and a vessel below.²⁶⁴ This was advice for a learned reader; however, it corresponds with an example of a child's commode now in Milan's Museo Bagatti Valsecchi (fig. 2.28).²⁶⁵ Although this chair dates to the end of the nineteenth century, it incorporates fragments from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and, though much more ornate, is quite similar to the illustration in Ferrari's treatise: both feature a bench with a hole as well as a moveable bar to prevent the child from falling forward and off of the seat. While it is unclear what it looked like, perhaps the "child's stool" listed in the inventory of the home of Domenico Tibaldi, a Bolognese printer and architect, in 1584 was something similar to the drawing and wooden examples.²⁶⁶

Toilets such as that from Milan and depicted in Ferrari's text would have been specialty items and, especially if made of richly carved walnut, quite expensive and affordable to only wealthy families. There is no reason, though, that children could not have been trained using the close-stools, or moveable toilets, that were commonly found in Bolognese homes. As Cavallo and Storey have explained, over the sixteenth century, these objects came into use by the wealthy in the place of privies. Usually a box with a hole in the top and an earthenware vessel below, the object could be moved and emptied by servants, resulting in less smell than privies found under stairs and in other confined areas of the home.²⁶⁷ By the end of the sixteenth century, at least in Bologna, close-stools could be found in artisan as well as elite homes. For example Giulia Firtine, from an artisan family, had in her trousseau what seems to have been a very simple close-stool.²⁶⁸ In contrast, the senatorial Bianchetti household, discussed above, featured two of these objects, "one painted and the other with walnut moulding".²⁶⁹ Thus while the possession of a moveable toilet seems to have been common across the social classes in

²⁶⁴ Ferrari, 60.

²⁶⁵ Fortini Brown, *Private Lives*, 99.

²⁶⁶ "una scrana da putti di paviera", Gualandi, 32.

²⁶⁷ Cavallo & Storey, 263.

²⁶⁸ "una scrana da necessario L3", ASB, *Notarile*, Francesco Nobili, 6/1 (1551-1556), f. 101, 17 March 1553 (Dos Di Julie Firtine) (no pagination).

²⁶⁹ "Due scranne di noce da necessarii, una dipinta e l'altra con le cornici di noce fornite", *Archivio Bianchetti*, f. 25 (Inventario), 4^r.

late sixteenth-century Bologna, owning one that was painted or decorated with carved moulding, perhaps similar to the child's commode in Milan, was the preserve of the wealthy.

From close-stools to nappies and undershirts to ewers, early modern households featured a great number of objects to assist with the removal of different kinds of waste from the inside and surface of the body. Just as dirt, oil, sweat, urine and faeces needed to be safely purged, excess blood also needed to be attended to. Bleeding could be done purposely and from particular parts of the body to relieve various ailments, but could also be unregulated as with nosebleeds, haemorrhoids or menstruation. Although today we see these kinds of bleeding as quite different, in the early modern period, menstruation was seen as the body's way of purging excess blood as were nosebleeds and haemorrhoids.²⁷⁰

At this time it was believed that menstrual blood sustained infants in the womb and later was transformed into breast milk. Women who were not pregnant did not need this blood and so it was removed from the body as part of a monthly cycle.²⁷¹ Men also produced excess blood, but it was believed to be purged via sweat and oil, given that men were hotter than women.²⁷² The common age at which menstruation typically began is difficult to establish for the sixteenth century. Although modern scholars generally agree that young women began to menstruate at around age 14 during this period,²⁷³ this would have varied with social class as poor diet and heavy physical labour can delay menstruation.²⁷⁴ While there do not appear to have been special rituals or events to signal or celebrate menarche, or a first menstruation,²⁷⁵ this would have indicated a young woman's sexual maturity and that she was physically able to bear children.²⁷⁶ It thus marked the point at which a young woman could or needed to be married in order to ensure the honour of her family, particularly in the upper classes. As

²⁷⁰ Wiesner, 54; Patricia Crawford, "Attitudes to Menstruation in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past & Present*, no. 91 (1981): 47–73, 49. Also see Mercurio's discussion of menstrual blood as "escrementoso" in *La Commare*, 57.

²⁷¹ See Bell's discussion, 63–67.

²⁷² Mercurio, *La commare*, 59.

²⁷³ Wiesner, 54; P. Renée Baernstein, "'Sposa, figlia, sorella e vecchia matre.' Invecchiare donna in età moderna, tra demografia e cultura," *Storia delle donne* 2, no. 1 (November 1, 2006): 213–30. 14 is also the age given by some contemporary physicians. For instance see Mercurio, *La commare*, 60. On female adolescence and menstruation in the early modern English context, see Sara Read, *Menstruation and the Female Body in Early-Modern England* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 39–59.

²⁷⁴ Wiesner, 54; Crawford, 66.

²⁷⁵ Monica H. Green, "Flowers, Poison and Men: Menstruation in Medieval Western Europe," in *Menstruation: A Cultural History*, ed. Andrew Shail and Gillian Howie (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 51–64; 52; Crawford, 67.

²⁷⁶ Baernstein, 215–16.

Stanley Chojnacki has argued, in some instances girls were married as soon as possible after menarche, to protect them and their families from the risks related to their burgeoning sexuality.²⁷⁷

Just as menstruation signalled that a young woman was at least physically ready to be a wife and mother, delayed menstruation could also indicate it was time for marriage in the early modern period. This was because sexual intercourse, acceptable only between husband and wife, was thought to be a cure for those suffering from the late onset of menstruation. Young women who were unable to purge their excess blood were seen to be at risk of all kinds of ailments and illnesses, and “green sickness” in particular. It was thought that blood that could not be released would collect and putrefy, causing pain and the release of noxious vapours into the body. These problems were thought to be a result of too-tightly closed vaginal passages that were best loosened through intercourse.²⁷⁸

In addition to offering advice on how to induce menstruation, in both virgins and married women,²⁷⁹ early modern physicians and moralists also described the dangerous and magical effects not only of menstrual blood, but of menstruating women. For instance the consumption of blood would make men simple-minded and dogs rabid, while the presence of a menstruating woman would sour wine and darken mirrors. Many of these beliefs developed out of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, which saw menstruating women as impure and sexual intercourse with them as dangerous and so forbidden.²⁸⁰ These were ideas shared between literate men, and in some cases directed at female readers; however, we know very little about what women thought about menstruation.²⁸¹ Additionally, there is little evidence about the material culture related to women’s menstrual cycles. While there are references in medical texts to the examination of menstrual blood on linen cloths,²⁸² and to call someone a “menstrual

²⁷⁷ Chojnacki, “Measuring Adulthood”, 373-74.

²⁷⁸ Lesel Dawson, “Menstruation, Misogyny, and the Cure for Love,” *Women’s Studies* 34, no. 6 (September 1, 2005): 461–84; 471. Also see Helen King, *The Disease of Virgins: Greensickness, Chlorosis and the Problems of Puberty* (London: Routledge, 2004).

²⁷⁹ Bell, 63.

²⁸⁰ Dawson, 472. On the development of the association between menstruation and the monstrous, see Ottavia Niccoli, “‘Menstruum quasi monstrum’: Parti mostruosi e tabù mestruali nel ‘500’,” *Quaderni storici*, no. 44 (1980): 402-28; reprinted in English as “‘Menstruum Quasi Monstrum’: Monstrous Births and Menstrual Taboo in the Sixteenth Century,” translated by Mary M. Gallucci, in *Sex and Gender in Historical Perspective* edited by Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 1-25.

²⁸¹ Wiesner, 55; Crawford, 69.

²⁸² Green, 57.

rag” was considered a serious insult,²⁸³ the items that women used for items related to personal hygiene are not described in detail in treatises that deal with women’s “fiori”, or “flowers”, as menstruation was often called in early modern Italian.²⁸⁴ Nor do the inventories considered here shed light on clothing or other textiles related to menstruation, though it is possible that the many non-descript “panicelli” and “paniselli” that appear in lists of trousseau goods and household linens were used this way. It begs the question, though, whether women used “certain rags and nasty little cloths”,²⁸⁵ as appears in one inventory, perhaps repurposed from some old garment or other textile, or, were they specially made cloths? The material culture of menstruation has received little scholarly attention prior to the introduction of mass-produced sanitary napkins in the late nineteenth century,²⁸⁶ and is a topic that would benefit from investigation.²⁸⁷ Nevertheless, Bolognese households may have had textiles or other items for women to use during menstruation, just as they had towels, cloths and undergarments to pull other forms of “excrement” away from the body. And, information about the best ways to use these kinds of textiles was likely shared verbally between mothers and daughters, sisters or other female relatives, rather than in written medical or household treatises.

Just as gender was a factor in the ways in which one kept the body clean, age and social class were also important. Though most households seem to have featured ewers, close-stools and undershirts, the materials with which these were made and decorated transformed them from functional objects to symbols of wealth. Communicating this kind of information became even more important with respect to clothing, as the next section explores.

2.4. Dressing the Body

As Section 3 explored, linen undergarments were important for removing sweat, oil and other fluids from the surface of the body, for both children and adults. These garments would offer some protection from cold and dirt, but in this period, people typically wore

²⁸³ Wiesner, 56.

²⁸⁴ See, for instance, Mercurio’s explanation in *La commare*, 57. Also see Bell, 67. The term “flowers” was commonly used for menstruation across Western Europe (Green, 53).

²⁸⁵ “certi strazzi et panniselli brutti”, Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

²⁸⁶ See, for example, Sharra L. Vostral, “Masking Menstruation: The Emergence of Menstrual Hygiene Products in the United States,” in *Menstruation: A Cultural History* edited by Andrew Shail and Gillian Howie (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 243-258.

²⁸⁷ See Read, 105-113.

additional layers over top of undershirts and hose. The style, colour and fabric of the clothing that composed these layers were determined by age, gender, social class and, for women, marital status. As scholars have shown, in this period it was essential that a person's place in the world could be determined by an onlooker with a single glance.²⁸⁸ This was true for both children and adults; however, in addition to offering protection from the elements and conveying a person's class, gender and religion, to a certain extent, children's dress also needed to support their physical development. This was especially true during first days and weeks of life, when swaddling bands and nappies were children's principle articles of clothing.

As today, nappies would help to contain messes, keep other textiles unsoiled, and, as they could be changed as needed, kept the infant clean and dry as well, as was discussed in Section 3. On top of this layer, a small cloth might be wrapped around the child's feet and legs and then they would be swaddled, or wrapped in long bands of linen or wool from their feet up to the tops of their shoulders.²⁸⁹ A detail from Lavinia Fontana's *Nativity at Night* (c. 1570-75, fig. 2.29) perhaps gives some indication of the linens used in the care of new-borns. Here, Mary, Joseph and angels surround the Christ Child, with a small casket in the foreground that includes not only a rolled up swaddling band, but other linens as well, presumably for use as nappies and covering the new-born's feet.

Although some modern scholars have taken a critical view of the practice of swaddling, using it to condemn medieval and early modern parents as unloving and careless of their children's well-being,²⁹⁰ as Anne Buck has highlighted, it took considerable time and care to properly and safely swaddle an infant. Moreover, this was done not with the intent to neglect the child, as some have claimed, but to protect it from the dangers around the house such as open flame and animals.²⁹¹ Swaddling made an infant easier to carry and handle and kept the nappy in place, but it was also intended to keep the baby warm, safe and on track in terms of physical development. Doctors, moralists and other treatise writers all recommended that infants be swaddled, though

²⁸⁸ Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba*, 15.

²⁸⁹ Grazietta Butazzi, "Indicazioni sull'abbigliamento infantile dalle liste della Guardaroba Granducale tra la fine del secolo XVI e il secolo XVII," in *I principi bambini: abbigliamento e infanzia nel Seicento*, ed. Kirsten Aschengreen Piacenti and Roberta Orsi Landini (Florence: Centro Di, 1985), 25–33; 27.

²⁹⁰ For instance, Stephanie Miller notes that infants, "were also tightly bound for long periods of time to suppress involuntary movements" ("Parenting", 71).

²⁹¹ Anne Buck, *Clothes and the Child: A Handbook of Children's Dress in England, 1500-1900* (Carlton, Bedford: R. Bean, 1996), 24.

not too tightly, so that their “soft” limbs grew in straight and strong.²⁹² The sensation created by the bands of fabric was also thought to comfort and soothe the baby by recreating the sensation of the womb. Caregivers were also advised to regularly free infants from their swaddling so that they could exercise their limbs and be checked for physical defects.²⁹³

Although these texts were prescriptive and not necessarily descriptive of contemporary practices around the dress and care for new-borns, physical evidence suggests that parents did indeed swaddle their children. For instance, both the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and London’s Victoria and Albert Museum have swaddling bands in their collections, which were likely made in late-sixteenth-century Italy (figs. 2.30 - 2.31). Both examples are of linen, which was a common material for undergarments in this period, as was discussed in Section 3.²⁹⁴ These examples are also richly embellished with lace, silk embroidery and cutwork, suggesting they would have been costly items and worn by an infant for special events rather than for everyday use. Indeed, the ornate decoration and materials from which these items were made likely played a role in their being preserved. The simpler swaddling bands that were more appropriate for everyday wear in the sixteenth century do not seem to have survived, but do appear frequently in the inventories considered here. For example, the household of Domenico Fieravanti, a shoemaker, featured, “five new hempen swaddling bands”,²⁹⁵ and the inventory compiled after the death of the nobleman Ludovico Caccialupi, lists, “two used, white swaddling bands”.²⁹⁶ In both instances the bands seem to have been quite plain and were likely much more suitable for everyday wear by an infant than those decorated with silk and gold, which were for special occasions, discussed in the next chapter.

From around the age of six weeks, babies might have their arms freed from swaddling,²⁹⁷ and as they became more physically coordinated, learning to roll, crawl and eventually walk, their clothing changed to accommodate this development and exercise. Once arms and legs were freed to allow for greater movement, swaddling

²⁹² For instance see Antoniano, 139a. Summaries on the practice of swaddling in this period can be found in Ajmar-Wollheim, “Geography”, 76; Fortini Brown, “Children”, 140; Haas, *Renaissance Man*, 126-7; Buck, 17-24.

²⁹³ For instance, see Piccolomini, 22^v and Mercurio, *La commare*, 96.

²⁹⁴ See Cavallo and Storey, 254 and Cavallo, “Health”, 182-3; Elizabeth Currie, “Textiles and Clothing,” in *At Home*, 342–51; 343-5.

²⁹⁵ “cinque fasso da fare li putti novo d canova no 5”, Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti).

²⁹⁶ “due falzate bianche use”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 351^v.

²⁹⁷ Ajmar, “Geography”, 76.

bands did not necessarily disappear, and may have helped to secure a child's undergarments, keep them warm and help ensure their bodies continued to grow without defect.²⁹⁸

Once a child was fully able to walk, however, swaddling bands would be completely removed and both boys and girls might be dressed in long tunics or gowns, depending on the social class to which they belonged. Drawing on inventories and portraits from noble Florentine households, especially the Medici, Grazietta Butazzi has argued that the “unisex” dress of young boys and girls seems to have developed in the elite classes, beginning in the 1530s. By the 1590s this seems to have replaced the practice of dressing male children in “miniaturised” men's clothing, though it is unclear whether this occurred at all social levels or just in the upper classes.²⁹⁹ An instance of this practice can be seen in Giovanni Battista Moroni's portrait of a father with his two children, who both wear undershirts, very similar striped doublets and long striped skirts (fig. 2.32). As they are quite young, both children have short hair, too short to be styled in a gender-specific way with only the bows suggesting the child on the viewer's left is perhaps a girl.³⁰⁰

Although very young male and female children may have dressed similarly, their clothing began to differ more markedly sometime between three and six years of age.³⁰¹ Around this time, boys began to wear breeches rather than skirts and gowns, and girls donned bodices that were more similar to those worn by their mothers.³⁰² Age and gender-specific articles of clothing are apparent in the inventories considered here. For instance in 1553 the Bolognese shop of Giovanni Battista Fabri, a tailor, contained “two pairs of upper stockings, that is, one pair made of bocasine for men and one pair of canvas for boys.”³⁰³ Similarly, the inventory of Domenico Tibaldi's household includes “a used yellow skirt” as well as five aprons, all described as “for girls”, presumably his daughters, Caterina and Artemisia, in contrast to other articles of clothing noted as “for women”.³⁰⁴

²⁹⁸ Buck, 36 and 59.

²⁹⁹ Butazzi, 26-28.

³⁰⁰ *Art and Love*, 280.

³⁰¹ Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba*, 17.

³⁰² Fortini Brown, “Children”, 140; Ajmar, “Geography”, 86. For the English context see Buck, 81.

³⁰³ “doe para d scofoni cioe uno par de bocasino, da homo e uno par da puto, di tella L0-14”, ASB, *Notarile*, Francesco Nobili, 6/1 (1551-1556), f. 36, 13 April 1553 (Fabio e Paolo de Fabri) (no pagination).

³⁰⁴ “Item una sottana di pano giallo per le putte usa” and “Item quattro grimbali di tella vecchj per le putte” in the inventory of the home of Domenico Tibaldi, 24 January 1583 published in Gualandi, 34 - 35. His daughters are named in the transcription of Tibaldi's last testament (Gualandi, 25).

It is unclear if anything besides the size of the children's garments differentiated them from those intended for adults. Based on contemporary portraits of children, some scholars have argued boys' breeches and girls' bodices were simply miniature versions of the clothing their parents wore, while others have suggested this was rather a pictorial device to refer to the future adult role of the child and not representational of their actual dress.³⁰⁵ According to the criticisms of some sixteenth-century moralists, it seems that both could be true. For instance, Silvio Antoniano condemned the practice of dressing children, “in the guise of youths”, as it prohibited the correct growth and formation of their limbs.³⁰⁶ Thus, up to a certain age, clothing was important not only for warmth and comfort, but for proper physical development as well.

Regardless of whether or not parents dressed children as “miniature adults”, too much attention to their appearance was seen as dangerous. Antoniano, for example, believed this could set children on a path towards vanity and jealousy.³⁰⁷ As he notes, at baptism a good Christian was “renouncing the devil and his pomp”, rather than embracing it. Therefore, in his opinion, even children from noble families, who were to be dressed honourably, should be in plain and simple clothing.³⁰⁸ If vanity took root in childhood, it blossomed in youth, according to moralists, and was particularly a problem with adolescents from wealthy families. As Antoniano describes:

after getting out of bed [they] occupy long stretches of time combing their hair, cleaning their teeth, washing hands with perfumed soaps, discoursing with tailors, cobblers, servants and groomsmen, which consumes with much vanity the best hours of the day.³⁰⁹

This was not to say that no time should be spent on personal hygiene, but rather that more time was to be devoted to the soul, studies, work around the house and being outside than to one's appearance.³¹⁰ The key problem with too much time spent grooming, at least from Antoniano's view, was that it made a boy *effeminato*, or

³⁰⁵ On the former, see Elizabeth Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence* (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 109 and Buck on the latter (p. 13).

³⁰⁶ “... volerli veder vestiti à guisa di giovani...”, Antoniano, 20b.

³⁰⁷ Antoniano, 139a.

³⁰⁸ “...si ricordano di haver nel battesimo rinunciato al diavolo, & alle sue pompe”, Antoniano, 139b.

³⁰⁹ “...percioche si ritrovano alcuni, massime giovani nobili, & ricchi, che dopo essersi levati da letto la mattina, si occupano lungo spatio di tempo nel pettinarsi, nel fregarsi i denti, nel lavarsi le mani con saponi odoriferi, & tanto ci e' da fare cosi lunghi discorsi co'l sartore, & co'l calzolaio, & co[n] i servitori, & coi camerieri, che si consumano vanissimamente le migliori hore del giorno”, Antoniano, 134b.

³¹⁰ Antoniano, 134b.

effeminate; vanity was a female problem.³¹¹ This opinion seems to have been shared among moralists and household treatise-writers of the period, who wrote at length about ensuring young women did not become too focused on their clothing, makeup and hair. Ludovico Dolce, for instance, urged that women be praised only for their virtue and not their rich clothing, and that too much attention to their appearance created competition and jealousy.³¹² At the same time, however, girls and young women, like their brothers, were expected to dress according to their station.³¹³

Although moralists were simply offering advice, sumptuary laws aimed to actually regulate what people could wear during this period. For instance, certain fabrics and weaves, such as silk damask; embellishments, such as embroidery; and quantities of precious metals, such as gold, were restricted to those within particular social classes, of certain ages and marital status. As Maria Muzzarelli has explained in her study of clothing and sumptuary laws in medieval and early modern Italy, this was part of a need for a person's age, social position, wealth and other factors to be immediately obvious.³¹⁴ For instance, a notice released in Bologna in April of 1596 states:

Men are prohibited from wearing any sort of gold... except boys up to the age of 12 years, which may not exceed the sum of 15 scudi; only for knights is it licit to wear a gold chain valued at 100 scudi at the most and for others [to wear] a medal that does not exceed the value of 25 scudi, and on clothing for the field as much gold or silver so long as it does not exceed the value of 15 scudi, but not, however, with any sort of embroidery.³¹⁵

In this instance, prohibitions are based on both age and social class, ensuring that, so long as these laws were followed, key characteristics could be immediately apparent to contemporary onlookers. For females, marital status also needed to be obvious through dress and accessories. For instance in 1572, the city conceded:

³¹¹ "...l'animo ne diviene molle, & effeminato", Antoniano, 134b See Currie's discussion of early modern ideas about dress and effeminacy in *Fashion*, 116-127.

³¹² Dolce, *Dialogo*, 30^r.

³¹³ Dolce, *Dialogo*, 30^v. Also see Leonardi, 149.

³¹⁴ Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba*, 12-15.

³¹⁵ "Si vieta similmente agli huomini il portare sorte alcuna d'oro come di sopra, eccetto alli putti sino all'età di 12 anni, che non ecceda però la somma di 15 scudi; risolvendo anco a cavaglieri che sia lecito portare una colana d'oro di valore di cento scudi al più et a gli altri una medaglia che non ecceda il valore di 25 scudi, et su gli abiti da campagna tant'oro o argento solamente che non ecceda il valore di 15 scudi, ma non però con sorte alcuna di ricami." Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, "Bologna," in *La legislazione suntuaria: secoli XIII-XVI: Emilia Romagna*, ed. Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, (Rome: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, direzione generale per gli archivi, 2002), 1-262, 260.

...women can wear only one string of pearls, which cannot pass the base of the throat, and those who cannot or do not want to wear a string of pearls... are allowed to wear a necklace that does not surpass the value of 50 scudi, but the wearing of a string and necklace at the same time is prohibited and similarly, the wearing of more than two ringers per finger and two gold bracelets is permitted, in which case, however, [nothing else is allowed]. Conceding also to brides that other than the above said things, they can wear for two years from the day of marriage... two pendants, not more than one of which can be a cross.³¹⁶

Here, it is not the age of the individual, but her marital status that determined what was appropriate. Other factors, such as religion and place of origin also determined what kinds of clothing, jewellery and accessories were appropriate for a person to wear, as scholars have investigated in Bologna and other Italian cities.³¹⁷

With all of the different factors that determined the style, colour and fabric of the clothing that one might wear, and little physical evidence remaining today, it is difficult to reconstruct how children and young people might have dressed in late-sixteenth-century Bologna. Apart from references to swaddling bands, undershirts, handkerchiefs, doublets and skirts, there are few instances of clothing that is clearly intended for children or adolescents in the household inventories considered here. Additionally, there are very few pieces of children's clothing from this period that survive today. Portraits and other images certainly feature children and give some indication of their clothing; however, these are neither exact representations of everyday life nor practices of dress. Nonetheless, we do know that from the first hours and days of life until about age six, it was key that clothing kept fragile bodies warm and safe whilst helping them to properly develop and grow. At the same time, it was also important that the child's position within the hierarchy of the city and even the family be expressed and reinforced by means of their clothing.

³¹⁶ “Si concede alle donne il poter portar un filo di perle solo, ma che non passi la fontanella della gola, et chi non potrà o non vorrà portare il vizzo di perle come di sopra se li concede il portare una collana che non passi però il valore di scudi cinquanta, ma in un medesimo tempo si proibisce il portare il vizzo et la collana et similmente se li concede il portare dui o più anelli al dito et dui brazzali d’oro, nelli quali però non sia cosa alcuna proibita. Concedendo ancora alle spose che oltre le cose dette di sopra possano portare, per dui anni continui cominciando dal dì che seranno sposate et seguendo fino in fine, due pendenti, uno dei quali possi essere croce et non più oltre.” Muzzarelli, “Bologna”, 225.

³¹⁷ See, for instance, Muzzarelli's discussion of sumptuary laws and the clothing belonging to a Jewish woman in Bologna during the second half of the fifteenth century. *Guardaroba*, 59-68. Also see: Muzzarelli, “Bologna”, Catherine Kovesi Killerby, “Heralds of a Well-Instructed Mind: Nicolosa Sanuti’s Defence of Women and Their Clothes,” *Renaissance Studies* 13, no. 3 (1999): 255–82; Frati, *La vita privata*; V. Sacco (ed.), *Statuti di Bologna* (Bologna, 1735), i.

2.5. Sleep

In the early modern period, the bedchamber and particularly beds were important sites in the life-cycle. This was where people were born and died, fell ill and recovered, took meals and received guests during special occasions. Beds were also associated with marriage, sometimes coming into a home as part of Bolognese bridal trousseaux and at others acquired or refurbished by husbands-to-be for the marital chamber.³¹⁸ This was where marriages were to be consummated and children conceived and born.³¹⁹

The bed was also important for the more mundane, though no less important purpose of providing a place to sleep. As Sandra Cavallo and Tessa Storey have demonstrated, early modern Italian homes featured many objects to help ensure good quality sleep, during both the night and day. Bed curtains kept out draughts, light and noise during the night, while leather chairs and pillows offered enough comfort for a nap during the day, but not so much that sleep went on for too long or too deeply.³²⁰ This is true for sixteenth-century Bolognese homes as well, which featured an array of goods associated with sleep, including beds, curtains, bed-warmers, coverlets, sheets and bolsters.

Although sleep was required by all as a means of “restoring the tired body”, and particularly important for proper digestion,³²¹ as Silvio Antoniano explained, it was essential for children on account of “the humidity abundant within them”.³²² Bolognese homes featured many bed-linens specifically for children. For example, the inventory of Camillo Caccianemici's home drawn up in 1551 includes “a turquoise child's coverlet”,³²³ in 1588 the Saraceni family was in possession of “a small sheet for a cradle of fine linen”,³²⁴ and, in the same year the inventory of the Caccialupi household

³¹⁸ Based on the inventories considered here, brides from artisan families were more likely to have beds as part of their trousseaux than those from the nobility. See for instance: ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), 25 November 1598 (Dos D. Elisabetta di Pinu) (no pagination); *ibid.*, 1 July 1592 (Dos D. Alexandra di Vincentis) (no pagination); *ibid.*, 8 February 1590 (Dos D. Catterina di Fabri) (no pagination). On the varied ways in which beds were acquired at the time of marriage in the Florentine context, see Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, & Family*, 110.

³¹⁹ Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, & Family*, 36.

³²⁰ Cavallo & Storey, 136

³²¹ Antoniano, 137a. Also see Karl H. Dannenfeldt, “Sleep: Theory and Practice in the Late Renaissance,” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 41, no. 4 (1986): 415–41; 422 and Cavallo & Storey, 116.

³²² Antoniano, 137a.

³²³ “Un coverturo da puti di pano agiuro turchina”, Notaio Sigurani (Caccianemici).

³²⁴ “Un lenzuolino da cuna di lino sotile L2”, Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 446^r.

included, “a small yellow coverlet with a little mantle trimmed in red velvet.”³²⁵ These are examples from elite households, but families of more humble backgrounds also had bedding for children, such as the “cloth for a cradle” noted in the modest trousseau belonging to one Agnetta in 1558.³²⁶ In 1583 the home Domenico Tibaldi featured “a small woollen blanket for a bed of yellow and red”, presumably for the little hens-down mattress “for children”, which it precedes in the inventory.³²⁷

Despite the number of blankets and bed-linens associated with young people found in the inventories considered here, there are very few references to actual beds for children. Apart from the mattress just noted, the only other beds explicitly linked to children are a cradle in storage in the Tibaldi home,³²⁸ and a cradle “without boards”, suggesting it was not in use, in the home of the notary Alberto Zanolini.³²⁹ The apparent absence of these objects, though somewhat surprising, does not seem to have been specific to sixteenth-century Bologna.³³⁰ In his study of the Italian peninsula more broadly, Peter Thornton has also noted that inventories of both aristocratic and middling-sort of homes include linens for cradles but not the cradles themselves,³³¹ Renata Ago has found a similar situation in seventeenth-century Rome.³³² Domestic account books, though, from both Rome and Florence record that cradles, bedding, swaddling bands, charms and other items, were sent along with new-borns to the wet nurse.³³³ Although these kinds of sources from sixteenth-century Bologna have largely been lost, it is reasonable to assume that Bolognese parents sent similar items along with their children to the wet nurse, a practice common in this period as discussed in Section 1.

But there is also evidence that families kept cribs and beds specifically for infants and children at home as well. Silvio Antoniano, for instance, warned against the dangers of leaving infants in their cribs unattended: “various accidents, such as fire or

³²⁵ “Un copertina piccolo giallo co la mantellina guarnito di velluto rosso”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 351^v.

³²⁶ “Item uno drappo da cuna L0-16”, ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1551-1559), 1 December 1558 (Dos D Agnetta) (no pagination).

³²⁷ “Item una colcedrella da putti di pena di galina — Item uno panetto da letto di lana, giallo e rosso”, Gualandi, 35.

³²⁸ “una cuna da putti” is listed within the *granaro*. Gualandi, 32.

³²⁹ Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 5^r.

³³⁰ In her study of the Bolognese Casali family’s city and country homes in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Catherine Fletcher has also found bedding for cradles, but not cradles themselves. Fletcher, 29.

³³¹ Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 256.

³³² Ago, 74.

³³³ Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 43; Ago, 74.

falling, or animals... could do them harm... one reads of domestic cats that take the eyes from the head of poor infants abandoned in their cradles and eat them up.”³³⁴ The sixteenth-century physician, Scipione Mercurio, also offers practical advice on positioning a cradle within domestic space, recommending it be placed away from windows or other light sources to prevent eye-strain or even blindness.³³⁵ There is also physical evidence of special beds for infants and children. For instance there are extant examples of cribs in museum collections and representations of birth and nativity scenes as well as portraits that depict children's beds. These seem to have ranged from very simple basket-like cradles, like that in figure 2.33, to richly carved miniature four-poster beds, as in figure 2.34 and discussed below.

In addition to providing a safe and comfortable place for an infant to sleep, rest or engage in passive exercise, cradles could also have dynastic significance, especially for elite families. As Thomas Jason Tuohy has highlighted, these ornate, costly pieces of furniture, which were sometimes decorated with coats of arms, would likely have been focal points when friends and relatives came to visit mothers and new-borns during the lying-in period.³³⁶ Alongside rich textiles and clothing for both the mother and child, cradles like that in figure 2.35, might have presented the new family member in a way that celebrated its birth but also the time and money that would be invested in its care.³³⁷

This is how Caroline Murphy has interpreted the expensive bed and linens in Lavinia Fontana's portrait of an infant dated to around 1583 (fig. 2.34).³³⁸ The painting shows a baby swaddled in bands trimmed with lace, covered by similar blankets and lying on a four-poster bed decorated with intarsia. The posts support a valence over the bed that also seems to be edged with lace or cutwork with curtains perhaps drawn back, indicated by the gathered fabric at the top of the bed and wrapped around the posts. Because the bed looks similar to a sepulchre, some scholars have suggested this is a

³³⁴ “...& parimente avvertano che ella non resti sola, esposta a varii accidenti, come di fuoco, ò di cadimento, ò di animale che potesse fargli male; poiche sino delle gatte domestiche si legge in alcune historia haver tratto gli occhi del capo, et magiatoseli, d'una povera creatura abandonata nella culla.” Antoniano, 20a.

³³⁵ Mercurio, *La commare*, 96.

³³⁶ Thomas Jason Tuohy, “Studies of Domestic Expenditure at the Court of Ferrara 1451 - 1505: Artistic Patronage and Princely Magnificence.” (Doctoral Thesis, University of London, 1982), 103-5. Also see Fortini Brown, *Private Lives*, 96; Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 36, 42-52; Allerston, 629-39.

³³⁷ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 175-6.

³³⁸ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 175-6. On this bed, also see *Art and Love*, 175-6.

portrait of a child that has died,³³⁹ however, Murphy has drawn attention to the two women in the background rummaging through chests, an activity that she argues represents their provision of ongoing care for the infant.³⁴⁰ Her position is further supported by evidence from the sample of inventories considered here, where there are instances of *lettierine* or “little bedsteads”, which seem to have been similar to that in the portrait.³⁴¹ For example, a *lettierina* appears in the inventory drawn up following the death of Sanfrancesco Marescotti in 1574, which lists, “a little, low bedstead of walnut with a base of softwood”.³⁴² Although Marescotti had children, it is unclear how many or how old they were.³⁴³ There were at least two children, however, living in the Caccialupi home where the second “little bedstead” was present, which was perhaps more akin to that in the Fontana portrait. This example comes from an inventory from 1617, which describes, “a little bedstead of walnut with half-columns and boards”.³⁴⁴ Although the entry does not state whether this bed was for the use of a child, nor in which part of the house it was kept, all of the other bedsteads in the Caccialupi home are noted using the usual term, *lettiera*, suggesting this example was small in size. It is also made clear in the document that the recently deceased patriarch, Carl’Antonio Caccialupi, had two children, Maddalena and Floriano, who were living in the family’s home in Via Galliera, one of which may have slept in this bed.³⁴⁵

The rich decoration of the bed frame and expensive bed linens in the Fontana portrait, as well as the interior in which it is set, suggests the infant was part of a wealthy family. Notably, the Marescotti and Caccialupi were both patrician families that would have used costly furniture, bedding and other textiles to demonstrate their social status and wealth, especially during the special events that followed childbirth such as baptism and lying-in visits. These kinds of objects were unaffordable and unnecessary

³³⁹ See for instance Angela Ghirardi, “Exempla per l’iconografia dell’infanzia nel secondo Cinquecento,” *Il carrobbio: rivista di studi Bolognesi* 19–20 (1993): 123–39; Vera Fortunati, *Lavinia Fontana of Bologna, 1552-1614* (Milan: Electa, 1998), 70; Patricia Phillippy, *Women, Death and Literature in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 143–8.

³⁴⁰ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 175–176.

³⁴¹ There are also instances of what appear to have been a full-sized bed very similar to that depicted in the portrait. For instance the “bedstead of walnut decorated with intarsia, moulding and columns” (“una lettiera di noce intersia da cornisata con le sue colone”) in the household of Bartolomeo Rota (Notaio Rota (Rota), 46^f).

³⁴² “una letierina de nuce bassa col suo fondo d legno dolce”, Notaio Sigurani (Marescotti).

³⁴³ This may indicate the children were female as usually even minor boys are named in household inventories.

³⁴⁴ “Una lettierina di nuce con mezze collone et asse”, Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 17^f.

³⁴⁵ The ages of the children are not provided, however, Carl’Antonio left funds for Maddalena to either be married or enter a convent. The fact that this decision had not been made suggests she was still relatively young. Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 19^f and ASB, *Notarile*, Giovanni Francesco Benazzi, 6/11 (1613–1626), Prot. 2, 12 February 1617 (Carl Antonio Caccialupi) 40^f–46^f; 41^f.

for most of the population. Indeed, perhaps part of the reason for the absence of cribs, cradles and beds specifically for children in household inventories is because it was very common for people to sleep together in this period. This would have been a necessity in modest homes with little space and resources for individual beds, but we also find children from noble families sleeping together with others. For example, Camillo Gozzadini, from one of the most illustrious families in Bologna, recorded sending his son, Gian Battista, to the wet nurse a few days after he was born in 1584. A few weeks after his arrival, Gian Battista was accidentally smothered in bed by his wet nurse, a fate not uncommon for infants in this period.³⁴⁶

It is unclear at what age a child might move into their own bed, though this was likely dependent upon gender, social class and perhaps the number of children in the family. Wealthy families, for instance, might have been able to more easily afford and provide space for beds for individual family members while more humble families might have been more likely to share beds and spaces for sleeping; this is reflected in the inventories considered here. For instance, there are only two beds listed in the post-mortem inventory of the home belonging to Troilo Bolelli, who had three minor sons when he died in 1552.³⁴⁷ The notary, Alberto Zanolini, had five beds in his home when he died in 1569.³⁴⁸ At this time, Zanolini had three daughters and four sons along with an indeterminate number of servants, whom the beds likely accommodated.³⁴⁹ In 1588, the household of the nobleman, Ludovico Caccialupi featured twelve bedsteads in different styles,³⁵⁰ at least another four specified as for use by servants and an additional three that seem to have been in storage.³⁵¹ At the time the inventory was drawn up, Ludovico's teenaged-daughter, Laura, was still living at home and she likely occupied one of the twelve beds. He also had three sons, Carl'Antonio, Giovanni and Cesare and though it is unclear if they were living in the family home in 1588, there is an entry in the inventory for "an old canvas bed canopy for Cesare"; perhaps there was a bed to go with the bedding reserved for the eight-year-old's use.³⁵²

³⁴⁶ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 123.

³⁴⁷ Notaio Nobili (Bolelli).

³⁴⁸ "Cinque lettieri de legno dolce vecchie", Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 4^r.

³⁴⁹ For the names of Zanolini's children see Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 2^r, 5^v and 6^r.

³⁵⁰ "Dodice lettieri di noce due senza colore, l'altre con le colore, ma non vene sono seno due di moderne", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 353^r.

³⁵¹ "Quattro lettieri per li servitori et una sul granaro" and "Tre lettieri da [illegible] tra le quali una sola vero e bona", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 353^r and 353^v.

³⁵² "Un sparaviero vecchio di tella per Cezare", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 352^r. Notably, the inventory of the same house drawn up in 1617 includes a number of bedsteads and mattresses among the

This entry in the inventory is notable not only because the canopy is specified as being for a specific person, no less a child, but also because it contrasts greatly with many of the other canopies and coverlets described as being in the Caccialupi home. Preceding that “for Cesare” are canopies of damask, taffeta, shot-silk and satin, in a range of colours and patterns, at times with what seem to have been matching cushions and wall hangings.³⁵³ Although heavier fabrics might have been used during colder seasons, the apparent simplicity of Cesare’s canopy might also be related to contemporary advice on children, bedding and sleeping habits. For instance, writing in the early-fifteenth century, Giovanni Dominici advised that children be made to sleep on daybeds once a week, “with the windows open” as a means of preventing them from becoming too delicate.³⁵⁴ Silvio Antoniano is similar in his desire to see parents find balance between acting with tenderness and severity,³⁵⁵ and he recommends temperance in terms of how, and how much a child should be allowed to sleep.³⁵⁶ Ludovico Dolce also advocated moderation, recommending that girls’ beds, like their clothing, “be not delicate, but clean; not sumptuous but comfortable”.³⁵⁷

Thus, wealthy families may have sought to strike a balance between projecting images of wealth and lineage through items like gilded cradles with coats of arms, and ensuring their children did not become too delicate. Choices about furniture and textiles of different qualities may also have come down to the individual child. As is discussed in Chapter 3, the ceremonies and objects related to the birth of son could be much more costly than those for daughters, and perhaps this continued well after baptism and lying-in rituals were complete, with different beds and sleeping arrangements depending on the child. Thus, beds, bedding and other objects related to sleep might help communicate to individuals their place in the hierarchy of the city, family and household.

items belonging to Giovanni, who by this time had become a Barnabite priest. See Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 18^v-19^r. On *sparavieri* see Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 124.

³⁵³ See Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 351^v-352^r.

³⁵⁴ “Dormire alcuna volta vestito, una volta la settimana in sul lettuccio, quando in sulla cassa a sedere, colle finestre aperte”, Giovanni Dominici, *On the Education of Children*, trans. Basil Côté (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1927), 185. Also see Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 107.

³⁵⁵ Antoniano, 20b.

³⁵⁶ Antoniano, 137b.

³⁵⁷ “Il letto della mia Virgine sarà non delicato, ma mondo: non sontuoso, ma comodo. Il simile sia detto del vestire: il quale non vuole esser lascivo, ma honesto; non ricco, ma ripieno di mondezza. Percioche e pare, che l’animo mondo ami naturalmente una semplice mondezza, & il corrotto i panni pomposi, et fregiati, con profume di diversi odori.” Dolce, *Dialogo*, 27^v.

Conclusion

As the above sections have demonstrated, Bolognese families possessed a wide range of objects to care for the health of children as well as adults. In some instances, these items were likely shared among family members, with items such as ewers and basins used not only for hand washing but washing a new-born as well; beds might be shared between siblings or infants and their nurses; and many plates and bowls would likely have been used by various members of the household. Other objects had more specific purposes, for instance swaddling bands to warm and strengthen the body of a new-born, walkers to help small children become mobile and cradles with linens to provide a warm safe place to sleep.

Many of the objects related to creating a healthy environment could be found in both more humble and elite homes, as was discussed with regard to items such as cooking tools, swaddling bands and towels. Unsurprisingly, wealthier households had more of these items and in more costly materials, such as silver ewers, portable toilets with wooden moulding and embroidered silk bedding. It also appears that homes belonging to the wealthy were more likely to feature items specifically for children's use or to be used in their care, particularly those associated with sleep. From ornate little bed frames and embroidered silk coverlets to simple canopies and blankets, families of the upper classes seem to have been able to provide more individual space for sleeping than those of more humble backgrounds.

Similarly, though again not unsurprisingly, the elite families considered here had more objects available that could be used in the maintenance of the health of the entire household, which children could benefit from as well. For instance, musical instruments, weapons for hunting and horses for riding were more readily available to those children from the upper classes. This not only attended to their health-related needs, but the participation in activities such as music and hunting surely emphasised the gaps between those from different classes. Having time to spend cleaning, grooming and dressing oneself, too, as Silvio Antonio was so critical of, was a luxury of and benefit to children from noble and wealthy families.

Chapter 3: Baptism, Lying-in Visits and Charms in the Bolognese Home

The first hours and days of life were perilous in the early modern period, and Bolognese parents took many precautions to help protect their children from all sorts of dangers. New-borns were promptly baptised as a means of spiritual purification and ensuring that in death they would not spend eternity in limbo. Infants and children also wore charms and amulets with different powers and associations, both religious and magical, which could help to protect them from the many dangers and illnesses they faced. These were practical and even necessary measures to help ensure the safety of the most vulnerable family members, but they were also opportunities to demonstrate social and economic status and were often related to a child's age and gender.

The first section of this chapter considers the practices and material culture associated with baptism in Bologna. Although this was a religious rite that generally took place outside of the home, objects associated with it were kept at home, in some cases for years after the birth and baptism of a child. These were a means by which families demonstrated their wealth and social position within the hierarchy of the city to onlookers and attendees, but also to guests that visited the new mother and infant as part of the lying-in ritual, addressed in the second section.

Extant objects related to baptism and the festivities that followed generally belonged to wealthy and elite families, and we know much less about the displays put on and gifts exchanged between artisans in relation to childbirth. But, as the third section of this chapter shows, there is evidence that families of different social classes employed charms, talismans and amulets as tools to care for and protect their children. Objects such as Agnus Dei, coral bracelets and pieces of turquoise seem to have been related more to the age and gender of a child than the social status of their family. Thus, these items communicated and reaffirmed to both the child and the world around them important aspects of their identity.

3.1. The Material Culture of Baptism in Sixteenth-Century Bologna

In the early days of Christianity, adults were baptised as the culmination of a series of practices called *catechumenate*, which educated, tested and marked the entry of hopeful Christians into the faith. By the fifth century, however, the baptism of infants had become standard practice across the Italian peninsula. This was related not only to the predominance of Christianity, with more children being born to Christian parents, but

also to the increasing belief that baptism was essential to obtaining salvation.³⁵⁸ Writing in the thirteenth century, St. Thomas Aquinas argued that infants that died without baptism would spend an eternity in *limbus puerorum* or *infantium*. There, because of the stain of original sin, they were denied the beatific vision but would find happiness in the natural knowledge of God.³⁵⁹ In the sixteenth century, the Council of Trent reaffirmed Aquinas's view of baptism, and stressed that the sacrament not only removed original sin but was also both an instrument and sign of grace.³⁶⁰

Because of the risk that in death unbaptised infants would be sent to limbo, contemporary treatises on family and childrearing often emphasise the importance of this rite. Authors urged fathers to baptise their children as soon as possible after birth, and some even provided instructions for baptising infants who were unlikely to live long enough to be taken to church. In his *Institutione di una famiglia christiana* (1591), for example, Giovanni Leonardi explains that one must sprinkle water on the child's head (or any visible limb if the birth was still in progress) and utter the words: "I baptise you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."³⁶¹ This simplified version of baptism, however, was only to be used when the infant's life was in danger and it had to be baptised at home, often by the midwife, though a priest, cleric or even a layman was preferred.³⁶² If an infant that had had a limb baptised survived the birthing process, it still needed to be brought to a church, and, it was preferable that these ceremonies took place in a church whenever possible.³⁶³ Silvio Antoniano, for instance, explains that church was the only place where one could truly be in the presence of Christ, the care of the angels and close to the images and relics of the saints.³⁶⁴

In addition to functioning as a religious rite that inducted a child into the Christian faith and community, purified their soul and inferred grace,³⁶⁵ baptism was also socially significant. It was an opportunity for families to celebrate the birth of a child and the

³⁵⁸ Guido Alfani, *Fathers and Godfathers: Spiritual Kinship in Early-Modern Italy*, trans. Christine Calvert (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), 14-15.

³⁵⁹ Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), 90. Also see Henrietta Smyser Silberger, "The Iconology of the Massacre of the Innocents in Late Quattrocento Sienese Art" (Doctoral Thesis, Case Western Reserve University, 1999), 81 n. 167.

³⁶⁰ "Baptism," in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, edited by F.L. Cross and A. Livingstone: Oxford University Press, 2005)

<<http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780192802903.001.0001/acref-9780192802903-e-638>>

³⁶¹ Leonardi, 22.

³⁶² Leonardi, 22.

³⁶³ Leonardi, 22.

³⁶⁴ Antoniano, 19a-19b.

³⁶⁵ Leonardi, 22.

continuation of the lineage, as well as marked the infant's entrance into the civic community. Typically taking place just a few days after birth, baptism was the first time the infant was presented to the outside world, as it was carried from its home to San Pietro, the cathedral where all Bolognese children were baptised in this period.³⁶⁶ Additionally, the selection of a child's godparents, who carried and spoke on behalf of the infant at the baptismal font, was a means of establishing, strengthening and advertising relationships between families and individuals, both in Bologna and beyond.³⁶⁷

Because baptism typically took place so soon after birth mothers did not attend or organise the ceremony, which has led scholars to characterise it as a male-centred event. Moreover, written records regarding baptism, usually kept by men, generally include only the name of new-borns' godfathers, who were considered to be more socially and politically useful than their female counterparts.³⁶⁸ For instance, Gaspare di Nadi, a Bolognese stonemason living in the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries, recorded the dates of all of his children's baptisms in his diary.³⁶⁹ Each entry lists the names of the children's godfathers, but in only one instance is a godmother's name noted, and likely because she was the midwife who performed an emergency baptism for a child that died shortly thereafter.³⁷⁰ Records show that the tendency to omit godmothers' names continued into the sixteenth century. For example, entries appear in Bologna's baptismal registry for five of the children born into the patrician Caccialupi family, all of which include the godfathers' names. In only two entries, however, are the godmothers' names given.³⁷¹ Notably, both women were from high-ranking families, and presumably ties with them were considered more useful, and thus more worthy of note, than with the godmothers who stood for the other three children.³⁷²

Although baptism may have been a male-dominated ritual, it was so socially important, for both the child and its family, that some scholars have likened it to

³⁶⁶ Mario Fanti and Sergio Morara, eds., *L'archivio del battistero della cattedrale di bologna: parte prima i registri battesimali (1459-1945)* (Bologna: Archivio Generale Arcivescovile Bologna, 2002), 5.

³⁶⁷ See Louis Haas, "Il mio buono compare: Choosing Godparents and the Uses of Baptismal Kinship in Renaissance Florence," *Journal of Social History* 29, no. 2 (December 1, 1995): 341–56; Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 41-42 and 49-50. Also see Musacchio's *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 41-42.

³⁶⁸ Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 47-9.

³⁶⁹ Nadi, 29; 35; 42 and 51.

³⁷⁰ Nadi, 44.

³⁷¹ AArch, *Registri Battesimali*, 1567-1568, v. 26, 41^r; 1569-1570, v. 27, 25^r; 1571-1573, v. 28, 209^v; 1573-1575, v. 29, 47^v; 1579-1580, v. 33, 163^r.

³⁷² These were Beatrice Caetani Cesi, "and in her name the Illustrious Lady Domicella de Grassi", for Giovanni (1573-1575, v. 29, 47^v) and Barbara Casali, for Cesare (1579-1580, v. 33, 163^r).

marriage.³⁷³ In Bologna, some wealthy families put on such magnificent public displays during the procession to and from San Pietro, as well as at the baptismal ceremony itself, they must have been as impressive as some weddings. For instance, in addition to the baptisms of his own children, Gaspare di Nadi also recorded in his diary the birth and baptism of Annibale Bentivoglio's first-born son, Costanzo. Nadi describes the "grandest honour" with which the infant was brought to San Pietro on 20 September 1489, accompanied by young men, old women, his nurses, trumpets and pipes in addition to his godfathers.³⁷⁴ In the early-seventeenth century, the procession to Bologna's cathedral for the baptism of Marchese Guido Pepoli's first-born son included a large retinue of ladies and knights, described as having arrived in the richest carriages. Once inside San Pietro, the ceremony took place at the main altar, reportedly under a magnificent baldachin and to the sound of holy music.³⁷⁵

In addition to fanfare, baptisms also often featured rich textiles and costly jewels, worn by both the new-born and those attending the event. Although the descriptions of the two baptisms above do not go into detail about the clothing worn by the child or adults at the ceremony, there is evidence that some Bolognese children were decked extravagantly for these events. For example, the inventory of the moveable goods in Count Filippo Manzoli's *palazzo* from 1560 includes a *drappo di battista*, or baptismal blanket, in *orteghina*,³⁷⁶ a fabric made from nettles,³⁷⁷ as well as four swaddling bands embroidered in gold and silk.³⁷⁸ Although infants were swaddled in everyday life, as was discussed in Chapter 2, the use of gold and silk suggests these bands were for a special occasion or ceremonial use. Although it is unknown with what patterns or words they were embroidered, extant examples show that religious themes could be found on baptismal textiles.³⁷⁹ For instance, the detail of an Italian swaddling band now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in figure 2.30 shows embroidery in geometric patterns along the edge of the textile, as well as a Greek cross.

The Manzoli family's baptismal blanket is not described in any detail in the inventory, but extant examples of these textiles suggest they too could also be very ornate. For instance, the early seventeenth-century Christening blanket in figure 3.1,

³⁷³ Frati, 58. Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 39.

³⁷⁴ Nadi, 148-151.

³⁷⁵ Frati, 58.

³⁷⁶ "Un drappo d'orteghina battista", Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

³⁷⁷ "Glossario", in *Legislazione suntuaria*, 705.

³⁷⁸ "Quatro fasce da putti lavorate d'oro et di seda", Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

³⁷⁹ Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 49.

now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, is made of crimson silk, edged with silver-gilt lace and embroidered with flowers, fruit, birds and scroll-patterns. Although the needlework adds to the splendour of the blanket, the figures also have religious meaning, such as the peacock, which represents incorruptible flesh and resurrection (fig. 3.2). Christian symbols such as crosses and peacocks were intended to provide divine protection to infants during a perilous time of life, as well as marked them as part of - or becoming part of - the religious community.³⁸⁰ But, embroidery was a costly embellishment and its use was restricted to specific social classes in sixteenth-century Bologna.³⁸¹ Thus, richly decorated baptismal garments worn by children such as those in the Manzoli family demonstrated their place in both the religious community and the city's social hierarchy, as well as, by extension, that of their families.

Wealthy and elite families' use of rich textiles, ornate carriages, large retinues and numerous godparents at the baptisms of their children were derided by contemporary moralists as *pompe* or ostentatious display.³⁸² Furthermore, in many instances, these kinds of advertisements of wealth were also unlawful. Sumptuary laws, which governed by whom embroidery could be worn, for example, were intended to regulate the consumption and display of luxury goods, from textiles to jewellery and furniture to food.³⁸³ These laws were, in part, designed to ensure that one could immediately discern the social class, marital status, faith and so on of a person based on the way they were dressed.³⁸⁴ This way, ideally, people from the lower order would not be confused for their social betters.³⁸⁵

In this period, Bologna did not have sumptuary legislation specific to baptism, unlike some other cities in Emilia Romagna,³⁸⁶ however, the laws that determined what men, women and children of various ages, social classes and conditions could wear, how they could travel or what they could eat, "at banquets made for any reason",³⁸⁷ also

³⁸⁰ Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 47. Arthur van Gennep describes baptism as, on one hand, a "rite of incorporation", in this case into the Christian and civic communities and on the other, "a final rite of separation from the previous world, whether it be a secular world or one that is actually impure" (pp. 54 & 63).

³⁸¹ For instance *bandi* from 1566 forbade that courtesans wore embroidery "of any sort". Muzzarelli, "Bologna", 211.

³⁸² For example see Antoniano, 139b.

³⁸³ See, for instance: Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba*; *ibid.*, ed., *La legislazione suntuaria*; Frati, *La vita*; and V. Sacco (ed.) *Statuti di Bologna* (Bologna, 1735).

³⁸⁴ Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba*, 11.

³⁸⁵ Hohti, "Material Culture", 663.

³⁸⁶ For example see Elisa Tosi Brandi, "Cesena," in *La legislazione suntuaria*, 339–68; 361. On sumptuary laws related to baptism and lying-in rituals in the Venetian context, see Allerston.

³⁸⁷ Muzzarelli, "Bologna", 262.

applied to the textiles and objects present, “at home, in goods pertaining to *donne di parto* or other domestic celebrations”.³⁸⁸ For example, in 1575 it was ruled that, “no person of any state or condition, man or woman”, was to wear “in any sort of clothing or vestment”, gold or silver embroidery or needlework designs.³⁸⁹ The penalty for breaking this law was a fine,³⁹⁰ which does not seem to have stopped some wealthy families from possessing items such as the swaddling bands embroidered with gold found in the Manzoli household.

In addition to advertising the social class and economic status of the new-born and its lineage, the displays around baptism could also indicate the child's position within the family. The seventeenth-century Christening blanket in figure 3.1, for instance, was used by the Roman Savorelli family only for the baptism of first-born sons. There was a different, blue blanket used for younger sons and another still for the baptism of daughters born into the family.³⁹¹ In this case, the colour, decoration and design offered a visual indication of the status of the Savorelli family, but also the gender of the child wrapped in that blanket and his position within the familial hierarchy.

It is also remarkable that the blanket was in the Savorelli family's possession for over two hundred years, though little is known about how it was stored. Perhaps, as in the case of the Manzoli family, the ornate blanket was kept in a “beautiful walnut chest” with other richly embellished textiles for special occasions. Or, perhaps it was counted among the Savorelli's most prized possessions, as in an example from the Bolognese Caccialupi family. An inventory drawn up in 1588 following the death of the knight and patriarch, Ludovico, lists a baptismal coverlet with a little mantle of white damask among the family's most valuable possessions.³⁹² Notable here is that the coverlet remains in the household despite that the matriarch of the Caccialupi family,

³⁸⁸ “Dichiarando che dette cose proibite se intendano essere proibite così fuori di casa come in casa in apparati di donne di parto o altre feste domestiche et in qual si voglia altro modo.” Muzarelli, “Bologna”, 239.

³⁸⁹ Muzarelli, “Bologna”, 239.

³⁹⁰ Muzarelli, “Bologna”, 242.

³⁹¹ Victoria and Albert Museum, “Christening Blanket”, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O85015/christening-blanket-unknown>. 9 August 2016.

³⁹² “Un coperturo da Batezzare con la mantellina di damasco bianco fodrato di panno.” These items appear in the first section of the inventory, titled “things of gold and silver”, though they appear to have featured neither gold nor silver. Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 351^v.

Maddalena, was “growing old”,³⁹³ and presumably beyond childbearing years; perhaps it was reserved for children of the next generation.

Thus, baptism and the material culture related to it played several important roles in the life of a child and their family. The ceremony cleansed the infant of original sin and ensured that it would not remain eternally in limbo after death. It also offered an opportunity for bonds between families to be strengthened and advertised through the selection of godparents. The procession that brought the infant to and from the baptismal font presented the child to the world outside the home for the first time, sometimes with ostentatious displays that included rich textiles, costly carriages and beautiful music. These additions were expensive, superfluous to the actual ritual and even illegal in some cases, advertising the family's wealth and social class to attendees and observers. Finally, in some instances, the status or position of the infant within its family could also be signalled through the use of more or less ornate swaddling bands, blankets and other items.

3.2. Lying-in Chambers and Visits

Although baptism ceremonies often took place outside of the home, they were complimented by more intimate, female-focused rituals related to childbirth, which took place inside the home.³⁹⁴ In the days that followed childbirth and baptism, a new mother's female friends and relatives would come to visit her and the new-born, bringing food and gifts. These ritualised and festive visits seem to have occurred in the households of artisans, professionals and patricians, though much of the evidence we have today pertains to wealthy and noble families. Consequently, extant objects, literary descriptions and items in household inventories related to rituals around *donne di parto*, or childbirth and lying-in, similar to the material culture associated with baptism, suggest, that displays of material goods created a celebratory environment, but were also tied to a family's social class and wealth.

For instance, in 1582, following the birth of a daughter, Alessandra Carminali Bianchetti, the wife of the Bolognese nobleman and senator, is described in a chronicle as having been “visited by all the nobility in her apartment, composed of seven or eight

³⁹³ This is in reference to a gown Maddalenna, “has had dyed black... as now she is growing old”, according to the inventory (“Una Zamara di frigno morella che lei ha fatto tingere in negro...[illegible] come hora senesence [sic]”). Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 357^v.

³⁹⁴ Allerston, 632-33.

rooms”.³⁹⁵ The description of these rooms, quoted at the beginning of the Introduction to this thesis, includes many rich textiles such as tapestries, gold-fringed velvet and crimson silk as well as expensive objects including many little tables, a silver ewer, aspergilla, crucifixes over the bed and a door hanging with the family's coat of arms.³⁹⁶ While this description cannot necessarily be taken as truth, many of the textiles, furniture and other objects mentioned in the chronicle are strikingly similar to those listed in contemporary household inventories. For example, an inventory of the Saraceni household from 1588 indicates the family was in possession of “a little walnut table with a drawer”³⁹⁷ and “a sheet of fine linen from Spain embroidered with silk,” both described as “da donna di parto”,³⁹⁸ suggesting use by a new mother following childbirth.³⁹⁹ Perhaps the Saraceni, similar to the Bianchetti family, also covered the small table “di parto” with one of the costly tapestries or carpets also found in the inventory. On top of the richly dressed table, the family might have displayed treasures such as the bronze ewer or the Agnus Dei “with feet”, discussed below, also in their possession. The bed of the new Saraceni mother, who is unfortunately unnamed, may also have been decorated similarly to that of Alessandra Carminali Bianchetti, with the “sheet of fine linen from Spain embroidered with silk” and other rich textiles and linens noted in the inventory.

The Manzoli family also had clothing, bed linens and other objects similar to those in the description of the Bianchetti confinement chambers, in addition to the richly embroidered swaddling bands discussed above. For instance, in one of four “beautiful walnut chests”, were four women’s undershirts embroidered in gold, silver and crimson silk; a crimson cap decorated with gold rosettes; two pairs of pillow cases: one set embroidered in gold and the other in crimson silk; a silver-gilt goblet with a case; a richly ornamented religious text and many other valuable objects and textiles.⁴⁰⁰ Although none of these items are noted as being related to childbirth or lying-in visits, the costly materials, rich embroidery and colours suggest they were not for everyday

³⁹⁵ See the Introduction to this thesis for the details of this description.

³⁹⁶ Frati, 24.

³⁹⁷ Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 443^v.

³⁹⁸ “Un lenzuoli di Rensa lino di spagna da donna di parto lavorato di seda L30”, Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 446^r.

³⁹⁹ Musacchio has noted that tables specifically for the display of gifts given during the confinement visit was rooted in Byzantine imperial ceremony, though by the sixteenth century it had lost regal associations, becoming simply a place for setting food, gifts and other items (*Art and Ritual*, 81).

⁴⁰⁰ Notably, the baptismal fabric is kept in a different chest. The contents of the chest with the swaddling bands are listed in Appendix 1.

use; and, they are almost identical to the objects in the description of Alessandra Carminali Bianchetti's chambers. Finally, Filippo Manzoli's wife, Lucia, was pregnant at the time the inventory,⁴⁰¹ and was likely preparing for the birth of what would be a son and perhaps had in mind the child's baptism and lying-in visits that would follow.

The description of the Bianchetti lying-in chamber does not mention the new-born or how she was presented; however, there is evidence that, as at baptism, infants were richly dressed and displayed for these events. For instance, the ornate decoration of a walnut cradle now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (fig. 2.35), features coats of arms, gilding and carvings of unicorns, flowers and scroll patterns, suggesting it would have made an impressive place to present a nobly born infant to visitors.⁴⁰² Similarly, the portrait by Lavinia Fontana in figure 2.34 shows an infant swaddled in lace-edged bands, covered in equally luxurious bedding on a four-post miniature bedstead decorated with intarsia. There are similar beds and linens listed in Bolognese household inventories, as was discussed in Chapter 2, suggesting that although this portrait is not a reflection of reality, it may not be so different from how a new-born might have been presented in life. Indeed, the portrait likely commemorates such an event, a special moment in time when a new life was celebrated with ceremonies, visits and displays of material culture.⁴⁰³

Although visits to the new mother and child were more intimate than the baptism ceremony and took place in the domestic environment, the use of objects to communicate social rank and wealth was still extremely important, especially for elite Bolognese families. The home could be decked with costly textiles and gilded furniture, the mother and new-born dressed in embroidered silk garments and treasures put out on display as a means of impressing visitors. Additionally, lying-in rituals and visits could be so impressive they were worth commemorating, whether in chronicles, portraits or through the retention of objects associated with them, as is discussed in the next section.

3.3. Baptismal and Confinement Gifts

Along with rich textiles, ornate carriages and "holy music", gift giving was also part of the *pompe* that surrounded the baptism ceremony and lying-in visits. An infant's parents

⁴⁰¹ The preamble to the 1560 inventory describes Lucia as "uxoris pregnante". Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

⁴⁰² *Art and Love*, 175-76.

⁴⁰³ *Art and Love*, 278-79.

might give gifts as an act of charity and thanks to impoverished godparents that held the infant at the baptismal font “out of love of God”,⁴⁰⁴ but more often godfathers, godmothers and family members gave gifts to the mother and child.⁴⁰⁵ This was an important social component of the rituals that followed childbirth, which demonstrated the family’s worthiness to receive gifts and an individual’s ability to give them, creating complex obligations and connections.⁴⁰⁶ Florentine *ricordanze* and account books show that gifts ranged from the ephemeral, such as sweetmeats, wine and wax, to longer lasting items such as silver spoons, forks and goblets.⁴⁰⁷ With few of these kinds of sources for the Bolognese context, it is harder to determine what kinds of gifts were given for the birth and baptism of children; however, there is some evidence that they could be ephemeral or more durable items. For instance, one Bolognese chronicle describes how, in the early-seventeenth century:

Splendid gifts were received by the Countess Anna Campeggi, wife of the Count Giovanni Carlo Ranuzzi, on the occasion of their first-born son after many years of marriage. From her father-in-law, Count Annibale, [Anna] received eighty new ducats, a pair of diamond pendant [earrings] and a fan from Rome. From her brother-in-law she was gifted a silver case for gloves with a fan; from her mother-in-law, Countess Dorotea Cospi Ranuzzi, [Anna] received a jewel for the breast of pearls and diamonds; from her sister-in-law, Orinzia Ranuzzi, a reliquary of silver filigree and from her husband another eighty new ducats.⁴⁰⁸

As this example demonstrates, gifts given to celebrate the birth of a child, and a long-awaited for male heir in particular, might include various objects made of silver as well as jewels, money and fans, at least in seventeenth-century Bologna. In the period under consideration here, although there are instances of silver cups, spoons and other similar objects in inventories of patrician households, none can be connected to childbirth and baptism with certainty. However, the inventory drawn up following the death of the knight, Ludovico Caccialupi, includes a list of gifts given to his wife, Maddalena Bianchetti, which can shed some light on the exchange of objects around the birth of a child in sixteenth-century Bologna. The first two entries in the list of gifts

⁴⁰⁴ Haas, “Buono Compare”, 344.

⁴⁰⁵ Musacchio, “Lambs”, 150.

⁴⁰⁶ Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 49-50 & *ibid.*, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 41-42. Also see Klapisch-Zuber, “Griselda Complex”, 237-8.

⁴⁰⁷ Musacchio *Art and Ritual*, 49-50 and *ibid.*, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 41-42. Also see Klapisch-Zuber, “Griselda”, 237-238 and Haas, “Buono Compare”, 344-351.

⁴⁰⁸ Frati, 58.

describe, “a rosary of lapis [lazuli] with gold decades, a cross of gold beads below and a pendant of pearls and gold” and “a ring with a beautiful topaz [stone] inside”.⁴⁰⁹ Both of these gifts were from Beatrice Caetani Cesi (1556-1609), who was the godmother to Maddalena’s son, Giovanni Caccialupi (1573-1623), and were probably given as gifts for Giovanni’s birth and baptism. As the daughter of Bonifacio Caetani, the Duke of Sermoneta,⁴¹⁰ Beatrice was of a higher social status than Maddalena and her husband. Consequently, it was surely an honour to have Beatrice act as godmother for Giovanni.⁴¹¹ This is perhaps the reason for the prominence of the gifts within the list and that they had been kept by Maddalena for well over a decade.

Rosaries, fans, gloves and other items given as gifts to new mothers were often practical objects that could be used in everyday life, but were also physical evidence and reminders of the relationships between families and individuals. In the case of Maddalena Bianchetti, the gifts from her son’s godmother were of costly materials and so of considerable monetary value. They may have represented her connection to a woman of higher social status, bolstering Maddalena’s own position, as well as being imbued with memories of the birth of her son. Having a godmother from a prestigious family that was capable of giving such gifts may have, in turn, set Giovanni apart from his siblings or at least marked his prominent place within the family: he was knighted at the age of five and went on to have a successful career as a commander with the prestigious Knights of the Order of Saint John, as is discussed in Chapter 6.⁴¹²

In summary, the purpose of baptism was to purify an infant of original sin, prevent it from spending eternity in limbo and to mark its entrance into the Christian community. In addition to these spiritual meanings, baptism was also socially significant. The procession from the infant’s home to San Pietro was the first time it would be presented to the civic community, which could be done with much extravagance that often carried over into the baptism ceremony. The display of wealth continued during the visits to the new mother in the days after the baptism, with the family’s home and its inhabitants decked and dressed richly for the occasion. Finally,

⁴⁰⁹ “una corona di lapis signata d’oro con una croce di boitoni d’oro di sotto et un pendente di perle et oro donatoli dalla signora Donna Beatrice Caetana Cesi[;] un Anello con un bel topazzo dentro Donatoli dalla sopradetta”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 363^v.

⁴¹⁰ Lynn Matluck Brooks, ed., *Women’s Work: Making Dance in Europe before 1800*, Studies in Dance History (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2007), 58.

⁴¹¹ Notably, Maddalena’s brother, Lorenzo was interred at the Roman Jesuit Church, Gesù, of which Beatrice and her sisters were patrons. Brooks, 58.

⁴¹² Giovanni Nicolò Pasquali Alidosi, *Li caualieri Bolognesi di tutte le religioni, et ordini* (Bologna, 1616), 14.

costly gifts could be exchanged to establish, cement and commemorate bonds between families. The *pompe* of baptism and lying-in visits communicated the family's economic status and its position within Bologna's social hierarchy, or perhaps their aspirations. The use of particular colours, emblems and coats of arms on home furnishings further differentiated the family from others, locating the infant within a specific lineage. Finally, the material culture associated with and central to these important events also played a role in establishing the infant's identity within the hierarchy of their family. Gender, birth order and other factors might determine in what kind of garments children were carried to the baptismal font, the social status of their godparents and the level of splendour with which their mothers' chambers were adorned for lying-in visits. Therefore, the use and display of material goods, both in and outside of the home were intimately tied to a child's gender as well as their family's social class and level of wealth.

3.4. Charms and Amulets for Bolognese Children

As the first half of this chapter has demonstrated, much more is known about the material culture associated with baptism ceremonies and lying-in rituals related to children from affluent families than for those of more humble backgrounds. Although luxury textiles and gilded cradles were limited to the wealthy, the amulets and charms that helped protect infants during the precarious period between birth and baptism could be found in a broader range of Bolognese households.⁴¹³ Items including Agnus Dei, coral beads, dogs teeth and coins were employed by parents as a means of offering spiritual and physical protection from harm to infants and small children. Furthermore, these objects seem to have been more closely related to a child's age and gender than the social class to which their family belonged.

3.4.1 Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei were wax medallions made from the remains of the Paschal candle, sometimes mixed with Chrism, blessed by the pope and distributed during Easter week the first year of his reign and every seven years thereafter. Although they were typically

⁴¹³ Knight, 109.

stamped with an image of the Lamb of God and the cross on one side with the papal insignia or images of saints on the reverse, the medallions ranged in size, shape and means of presentation.⁴¹⁴ Larger versions might be set out for display in churches or homes,⁴¹⁵ while smaller medallions could be worn on the body. Regardless of the size of the disk, the fragility of the wax required that Agnus Dei be encased, and materials for these cases ranged from simple bands of fabric to bejewelled gold frames, as is discussed below.

From at least the Middle Ages, Agnus Dei were attributed talismanic and protective powers, from keeping buildings safe during thunder and lightning storms to preventing epileptic episodes.⁴¹⁶ Beginning in the twelfth century, the disks were also associated with pregnancy and childbirth,⁴¹⁷ and a papal bull in 1470 by Paul II acknowledged that Agnus Dei were useful for pregnant women, sanctioning popular beliefs.⁴¹⁸ They were also considered a powerful means by which children could be protected from a range of ailments and dangers. The physician Scipione Mercurio, for instance, argued that Agnus Dei were a more effective prophylactic than coral, discussed shortly, and were much more “Christian”. Thus, he recommended that the disks, “a sign of the faithful and a healthful medicine”, be worn by infants.⁴¹⁹

It is difficult to determine whether or not Bolognese parents and nurses followed this kind of advice, especially as very few of these delicate objects survive from the early modern period. However, domestic inventories show that Agnus Dei were present in some of the city's households and, in some instances, they were not worn on the body, but appear to have been set out on display. Maddalena Bianchetti, for instance, owned an Agnus Dei that was “set in ebony trimmed with silver and gold with false

⁴¹⁴ Margaret Anne Morse, “The Arts of Domestic Devotion in Renaissance Italy: The Case of Venice” (Doctoral Thesis, University of Maryland, 2006), 256 and Musacchio, “Lambs”, 143-49.

⁴¹⁵ Morse notes that the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice owned an Agnus Dei that was several inches tall (“Arts”, 257). Also see John Cherry, “Containers for Agnus Deis,” in *Through a Glass Brightly: Studies in Byzantine and Medieval Art and Archaeology, Presented to David Buckton*, ed. Christopher Entwistle and David Buckton (Oakville, CT: David Brown Book Co, 2003), 171–83; 172. In Bologna, the Caccialupi and Saraceni families also owned Agnus Dei that were intended for display inside the home or domestic chapel, rather than worn on the body as is discussed below.

⁴¹⁶ See Musacchio, “Lambs”, 144 and John Cherry, “Healing through Faith: The Continuation of Medieval Attitudes to Jewellery into the Renaissance,” *Renaissance Studies* 15, no. 2 (2001): 154–71; 171.

⁴¹⁷ Morse, “Arts”, 259 and Cherry, “Healing”, 157.

⁴¹⁸ Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 177.

⁴¹⁹ “che questi [Agnus Dei] vagliono co[n]tra malie, fulmini, paure, & altri pericoli, che soprastano alle creature. Per questo reputo necessarto [sic] il farne tenere sempre addosso a i fanciulli, essendo un segno de’ fedeli, & una medicina salutare”, Mercurio, *La commare*, 98. See his extended discussion in *Errori*, 280^v.

jewels, [and] made for putting at the head of the bed”.⁴²⁰ This may have protected Maddalena or other inhabitants of the bed during sleep, but perhaps was also intended to assist with the conception of a child. Later, during childbirth, the Agnus Dei may have offered security to both the mother and infant. The noble Saraceni family also owned an Agnus Dei “with feet”, noted above, suggesting it was placed on a flat surface, perhaps on a table, credenza or over a doorway. This object may have protected the home from dangers such as fire and prevented inhabitants, which included children, from having epileptic episodes, for instance.⁴²¹

Bolognese families also owned Agnus Dei that were probably worn on the body, though by whom is never specified in the documents in which they are listed. For instance, along with the disk at the head of her bed, Maddalena Bianchetti also had, “a tiny Agnus Dei set in gold with the sign of the holy cross inside.” Although the inventory in which this entry is found does not indicate that there was a chain on which to suspend this Agnus Dei, that is was so small suggests it could be easily lost and so was perhaps hung as a pendant or kept in a cloth bag, possibly similar to figure 3.3.⁴²² Perhaps this object, which was a gift to Maddalena from her brother, was worn during her many pregnancies and deliveries. Later, the tiny Agnus Dei may have been worn by her children as a means of defending them against various dangers, as is discussed below.

Although the Caccialupi and Saraceni were both patrician families, Agnus Dei could also be found in artisan homes. For example, an inventory of the goods belonging to Francesco Persici, a barber, includes a nondescript Agnus Dei. This makes it difficult to know if or how the disk was worn on the body, though it may have been wrapped in the band of fabric that precedes it in the inventory, or suspended from the string of coral and silver beads listed in an entry that follows.⁴²³ The latter is similar to the way that an Agnus Dei in the possession of one Alfonso di Antonio is described in an inventory of 1578: “a long string of 116 pieces of coral with an Agnus Dei [encased in] silver and 16 crystals.”⁴²⁴ It is unclear by whom this object was worn or used, but it is similar to

⁴²⁰ “Uno Agnus dei legato in ebano guarnito di argento et oro con gioie finte da tenere a capo del letto donatoli da M. sig^r lorenzo sua fratello... Un agnus dei piccolino legato in oro con dentro un cross di segno della st^a Croce donatali dal sig^r lud^{co} suo fratello”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 363^v & 364^v.

⁴²¹ “Un Agnus dei col piede”, Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 445^r.

⁴²² Musacchio, “Lambs”, 146.

⁴²³ “una fasa; uno agnus dei; una torchina rotta; una filza di corali co Botisele darge[n]to”, Notaio Sigurani (Persici).

⁴²⁴ “una filza d corali longhi d numero 116 co un agnus dei d arge[n]to co 16 cristali”, ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1571-1599), 3 December 1578 (Alfonso Santi) (no pagination).

bridal jewellery described in sumptuary laws in Cesena, 91 kilometres southeast of Bologna. For example, ordinances of 1575 and 1584 declared that betrothed women could wear “one or more necklace” valued at a total of 35 scudi, and if they wanted to add items such as “coral, garnet, ebony or little pearls... beads of gold, crosses, [or] Agnus Dei,” these could have a maximum value of ten scudi.⁴²⁵

Returning to the example of the barber’s Agnus Dei, Francesco Persici’s wife, Eleanora, however, was no longer a new bride in 1555, as the couple had an adolescent son, Filippo Maria. Perhaps the Agnus Dei had been suspended from the string of coral and silver when the couple married and worn by Eleanora while she was pregnant with Filippo Maria. After his birth, the piece of jewellery may have been deconstructed and its parts reused to protect the new-born. Indeed, scholars have shown that some Florentine mothers reused items from their bridal trousseaux as talismans and charms for their children. For instance, Jacqueline Musacchio has demonstrated that items such as Agnus Dei that came into a home with a bride were later given to children to wear.⁴²⁶ Similarly, Suzy Knight has found that along with Agnus Dei, mothers placed beads, crosses and other items from their trousseaux with infants left at Florence’s foundling hospital, both to keep them safe and to identify the child if they were to be collected later.⁴²⁷

Perhaps Eleanora Persici, Maddalena Bianchetti and other Bolognese mothers acted similarly, using religious and talismanic objects such as Agnus Dei that they had in their trousseaux or were given as gifts to help them conceive and offer safety during childbirth. The proven efficacy of such objects may have made them especially useful in protecting infants and children from various illnesses, accidents and dangers. And, it was not just Agnus Dei that may have been used and reused in these ways, but also coral and other precious materials as well.

3.4.2. Coral

Although Scipione Mercurio argued that an Agnus Dei was a more effective prophylactic for children than a piece of coral,⁴²⁸ the latter could be found much more frequently in Bolognese households than the former. From artisans to patricians, many

⁴²⁵ Brandi, 365.

⁴²⁶ Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 203.

⁴²⁷ Knight, 125.

⁴²⁸ Mercurio, *Commare*, 98.

families had objects made of or embellished with coral, which seem to have often come into a home in bridal trousseaux. As just noted, items believed to have talismanic properties may have been used by new wives and mothers and then reassembled for use in the care of infants and small children. Objects made of coral seem to have especially functioned in this way, perhaps in large part because of the belief that the material could defend both women and children against numerous hazards and illnesses.

Going as far back as Pliny the Elder, coral was thought to have medicinal and protective powers: it supposedly helped with bladder trouble, brought on sleep in those suffering from fever, treated ailments of the eye, repaired ulcers and smoothed scars.⁴²⁹ Coral was also thought to have influence over the circulatory system,⁴³⁰ preventing haemorrhages and regulating menstrual flow, and was linked to the blood of Christ, sacrifice and redemption.⁴³¹ This association, paired with the notion that coral was a particularly effective talisman for children, is perhaps why the Christ Child is occasionally depicted wearing strings or branches of coral.⁴³² For instance, in Francesco Francia's *Madonna and Child with Two Angels* (1495), the Christ Child is depicted with a necklace of coral beads and cross (fig. 3.4). A later nativity scene by Pupini Biagio il Vecchio, originally for Bologna's Church of Santa Maria Maddalena, shows the swaddled Christ Child with bracelets and a necklace of coral beads (fig. 3.5).

Bolognese portraits of children also often show them wearing coral, as can be seen in two works by Bartolomeo Passarotti from 1575 and 1585. The latter, figure 3.6, shows a young boy standing with two figures, likely his grandmother and father, wearing a bracelet of coral beads on each wrist, just beneath his ruffled cuffs. In the portrait from 1575, a boy is pictured along with four other family members, wearing a necklace of coral beads (fig. 3.7). Similarly, a family portrait by Lavinia Fontana from 1598 shows a young girl and another female figure, perhaps an older sister, both wearing short coral necklaces (fig. 3.8). Although neither these portraits nor the images of the Christ Child necessarily reflect reality, the frequency with which young people are depicted wearing coral, the advice found in household treatises regarding the use of coral in childcare and that the material so often appears in domestic inventories, suggests that Bolognese families did dress their children in coral. While social class

⁴²⁹ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. W. H. S Jones (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1963), 476-479.

⁴³⁰ Lodovico Dolce, *Libri tre ne i quali si tratta delle diverse sorti delle gemme* (Venice, 1565), 36^r-36^v.

⁴³¹ Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 203-204; *ibid.*, "Lambs", 151; Morse, "Arts", 224.

⁴³² Musacchio, "Lambs", 151; *ibid.*, *Art, Marriage and Family*, 203.

does not seem to have been a key determining factor in whether a family or individual owned coral objects (it was licit for even peasant women to wear the material, for example), the gender and age of the wearer does seem to have mattered.

For instance, as noted above, the barber Francesco Persici owned a string of coral and silver beads. Similarly, Simone Tamburini, a Bolognese carpenter, left his daughters, Domicella and Cassandra, each a string of coral when he died in 1589.⁴³³ Margherita de' Serli brought a string of coral and gold beads as well as a pair of coral bracelets to her marriage with Sigismondo Gozzadini in 1587,⁴³⁴ who was from a lesser branch of the prominent Bolognese family. Finally, in the noble Saraceni household, there were "three branches of coral", a piece of coral, presumably a bead, and a string of the talismanic material.⁴³⁵ Thus, we can find coral in the homes of nobles and artisans as well as in brides' trousseaux as plain beaded bracelets, ornate necklaces with silver and gold, and as branches.⁴³⁶ And, the coral jewellery listed in inventories often seems to be quite similar to pieces depicted in contemporary portraits.

The inventory of the goods found in the home of Isabella Rosetti in 1596, for example, includes a necklace and pair of bracelets of coral both described as *schietto*, or plain.⁴³⁷ The strings of coral left to Domicella and Cassandra Tamburini and that found in the Saraceni household noted above were also presumably simple coral beads. These items seem to have been similar to those depicted in portraits of children, including those by Passarotti and Fontana discussed above (figs. 3.6 - 3.8). In all three paintings the children wear what appear to be quite plain necklaces and bracelets of coral, without the embellishment of other valuable materials. Unfortunately, as with Agnus Dei, there are few extant coral necklaces and bracelets from this period with which to compare written descriptions and painted examples.

⁴³³ "due filce de corali", listed in the content of two chests with items described as for the use of Tamburini's daughters. ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), 15 March 1589 (Simone Tamburini) (no pagination).

⁴³⁴ "Una filza di Coralli signati co no 12. Botton d'oro e un pare di Brazali di Corali estimati tutti L54", ASB, *Notarile*, Tommaso Passarotti, 6/1 (1586-1587), 5 May 1587 (Dos d Margherita), 224^f-228^r; 226^v.

⁴³⁵ "Una filza di corali... n° 3 pezzi di radicedi coralli e un corallo...", Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 445^v.

⁴³⁶ There is not enough information in the inventories consulted here or in secondary sources to establish the cost or value of coral, though presumably better quality coral of higher finish or combined with other valuable materials could be purchased for higher prices. Musacchio describes coral as "readily available", and as it was harvested in the Mediterranean, it could probably have been obtained for relatively little. Musacchio, *Art, Marriage and Family*, 203.

⁴³⁷ "un colo d corali tondi schietti...un paro d brazali d corali schieto", ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1571-1599), 6 July 1596 (Isabella Rosetti) (no pagination). The document gives no indication of Isabella's social status, as she is described only as the daughter of Francesco Rosetti (and neither the wife nor widow of another man).

While it is not unusual to see male infants and young children wearing coral in portraits, it is difficult to find boys older than about age six or seven wearing coral necklaces or bracelets. The Fontana portrait from 1598, for instance, depicts both male and female children across a range of ages, yet only the girls wear coral. Similarly, in Fontana's *Consecration to the Virgin* (1599), the two young girls both wear long necklaces with alternating coral and small gold beads (fig. 3.9). Notably, the two boys, who are about the same age as the girls, do not appear to wear any jewellery, though their thick ruffled collars may be hiding coral beads worn next to their skin. Perhaps around the time of breeching, when boys began to wear hose, usually around age seven,⁴³⁸ and left the care of women for school they traded in coral for a pen and ink pot, weapon or book. Thus, the absence of coral necklaces and bracelets perhaps in some ways signalled boys' successful transition through the early life stages.

That boys stopped wearing coral at a particular age is also suggested in Bolognese archival documents, such as the inventory drawn up upon the death of Troilo Bolelli in 1552. Along with land, clothing and household goods, Troilo left his heirs three coral necklaces, perhaps one for each of his minor sons, Domenico, Giovanni Battista and Alessandro.⁴³⁹ Although the ages of the boys are not given, the inventory notes a balance of eight lire owing to Lorenzo, “nostro balio,”⁴⁴⁰ or the wet nurse's husband, suggesting at least one of the children (likely Alessandro),⁴⁴¹ may have been quite young and was either still with or recently returned from the wet nurse. Very unusually, and in fact singular among the inventories considered here, the entry for the necklaces notes that two of them had been pledged to Bologna's Monte di Pietà for three gold scudi.⁴⁴² Perhaps Domenico and Giovanni Battista had grown too old to wear coral, making it acceptable and even necessary to pawn the two necklaces to help pay for the many debts that Troilo left his heirs to pay off.

Although only very young boys seem to have been depicted in coral jewellery, their sisters wore both plain and more ornate coral necklaces for a greater length of time. Similar to the plain strings of coral, these items also correspond with those listed

⁴³⁸ Fortini Brown, “Children”, 141.

⁴³⁹ Notaio Nobili (Bolelli).

⁴⁴⁰ “a Lorenzo nostro balio lir' otto”, Notaio Nobili (Bolelli).

⁴⁴¹ Again, the ages of the boys are not given but in other inventories where ages of children are provided, they are always listed from eldest to youngest. In the Bolelli inventory, the boys are always listed Domenico, Giovanni Battista and Alessandro, suggesting Alessandro was the youngest of the three. There may also have been daughters born to Troilo and his wife, but there is no indication of their existence in the inventory.

⁴⁴² “Tri colli d corali delli quali ne pegno dui al monte d'lla pieta, scudi tri d or”, Notaio Nobili (Bolelli).

in inventories of homes and bridal trousseaux. As noted above, Francesco Persici and Margherita de' Serli both owned strings of coral and silver and coral and gold respectively. Similarly, and in addition to the plain coral necklace and bracelets, Isabella Rossetti also owned a string of round coral pieces with gold beads.⁴⁴³

These, and other strings of coral found in inventories of homes and brides' trousseaux correspond with necklaces worn by girls and young women in contemporary portraits. For instance, the necklaces worn by the two girls in Lavinia Fontana's *the Consecration to the Virgin* appear quite long, with alternating beads of coral and gold. Fontana also depicted herself wearing both long and short necklaces that alternate coral and gold beads in a self-portrait from 1577 (fig. 2.10).⁴⁴⁴ Finally, another portrait by Fontana, this time featuring Antonia Ghini, shows the young girl wearing two pieces of coral jewellery: a choker with a large pearl pendant and a longer doubled-string of coral with gold beads interspersed and a beaded cross pendant (fig. 3.10).⁴⁴⁵ Although these images are not straightforward representations of reality, there is evidence that painters, including Lavinia Fontana, sometimes depicted jewellery owned by their sitters in portraits. For instance, the gowns and jewellery worn by Laudomia and Flaminia in the *Gozzadini Family Portrait*, painted by Fontana in 1584 (now in Bologna's Pinacoteca Nazionale) correspond with items described in the Gozzadini family account book.⁴⁴⁶ Thus, in some instances portraits must have featured jewellery, clothing and other items owned or worn by the sitter, if only for special occasions and major life events.

While necklaces like those in portraits and found in inventories would likely have been costly and beautiful ornaments for girls and young women, they were also seen to have health benefits. In addition to preventing haemorrhages and treating fever, suspending coral so that it touched the stomach was thought to assist with weakness and trouble in this part of the body, and it was also associated with fertility and menstruation.⁴⁴⁷ Perhaps this is why long coral necklaces are often depicted as having been tied or knotted over female wearers' abdomens. Additionally, as discussed above, the material was thought to offer children protection from epileptic fits, the evil eye and

⁴⁴³ "una filza d corali tondi co le botesese d oro", Notaio Sigurani (Rosetti).

⁴⁴⁴ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 38-44.

⁴⁴⁵ Antonia's necklace is similar to a rosary belonging to Maddalena Bianchetti: "Una corona di lapis signata d'oro con una croce di bottoni d'oro di sotto et un pendente di perle et oro", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 363^v.

⁴⁴⁶ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 119.

⁴⁴⁷ Dolce, *Libri tre*, 36^v. Also see Katherine L. French, "Genders and Material Culture," in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. Judith M. Bennett and Ruth Mazo Karras (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 197-212; 201.

other dangers. In the case of Antonia Ghini, however, coral did not provide defence against small pox, from which she died just before her second birthday.⁴⁴⁸

In addition to gold and silver, coral beads were also combined with other materials, including crystal and amber. For instance, and as discussed above, Alfonso di Antonio was in possession of a string of coral with an Agnus Dei and pieces of crystal.⁴⁴⁹ Perhaps similar to this example, in 1584 Ugolino Manella left his daughter Domenica, “a string of coral with antique crystal [beads] of different types.”⁴⁵⁰ In this period rock crystal, because of its transparency, was associated with purity of faith and as such sometimes related to baptism.⁴⁵¹ The material was employed for religious items such as processional crosses and reliquaries. Using it in devotional practice was thought to impart its qualities onto the worshipper and wearing the material on the body could do the same.⁴⁵² Additionally, wearing and even consuming crystal was thought to have health benefits. In his 1564 treatise on gems, for instance, Ludovico Dolce claimed that crystal could: “drive out bad dreams and free the bewitched; held in the mouth, it relieves thirst; and... it thickens breast milk.”⁴⁵³ Thus, crystal may have been seen as an especially appropriate material to be worn by women and children for both its religious associations and medicinal properties, despite the 1575 Bolognese ordinance prohibiting crystal “in all sorts of ornament.”⁴⁵⁴

Just as coral beads could be strung into simple bracelets or paired with other rich materials to form lavish necklaces, branches of coral were used on their own and with other objects as part of ornaments and prophylactic charms, as they were believed to have protective qualities and thought to have been often worn as amulets by infants in ancient times.⁴⁵⁵ It was also thought that these powers could be enhanced by pairing coral branches with other objects and materials to form charms that could lend children even greater protection. For instance, Bernardino Detti’s *Madonna of the Pergola* (1523) depicts the infant John the Baptist holding a charm that consists of a large branch of coral, an Agnus Dei, a cross and a tooth (fig. 3.11). Although this altarpiece includes many fantastical elements, charms similar to that held by the young saint have been

⁴⁴⁸ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 183-184.

⁴⁴⁹ Notaio Sigurani (Santi).

⁴⁵⁰ “una filza de corali con cristali antichi d piu fatta”, ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), f. 28, 26 May 1584 (Ugolino Manella) (no pagination).

⁴⁵¹ Morse, “Arts”, 252-253.

⁴⁵² Morse, “Arts”, 255.

⁴⁵³ Dolce, *Libri tre*, 37^r-37^v.

⁴⁵⁴ “Che i christalli siano prohibiti in ogni sorte d’ornamento”, Muzzarelli, “Bologna”, 244.

⁴⁵⁵ Pliny, 476-479.

found in Florentine domestic account books and inventories.⁴⁵⁶ These kinds of items do not seem to have been common in Bologna, but there are indications that families possessed combinations of objects with both sacred and more magical properties. For example, as noted earlier, the Saraceni family had what seems to have been a single loose bead or large piece of coral as well as three coral branches. Notably, this entry is preceded in the inventory by three coins and followed by a piece of jasper mounted in silver.⁴⁵⁷ While it is uncertain whether or not these objects were related to each other or combined, coral, coins and jasper were all known for their talismanic properties in this period.

Coins were sometimes wrapped in infants' baptismal swaddling for good luck and Suzy Knight has demonstrated that *grossi della Vergine Maria* (fig. 3.12), a type of *soldo* of little monetary value, were often left as amulets to protect abandoned Florentine children.⁴⁵⁸ No information is offered about the type of coins the Bolognese Saraceni family had, but that they are included among jewellery and gemstones, though seem to have had little monetary value, may suggest they were of symbolic or talismanic worth instead.

Jasper-stone, too, can be linked to children and childbirth, with instances of the stones being used in amulets for infants in Florence.⁴⁵⁹ Dolce also praises jasper for "letting women conceive: and especially the green [type] with yellowish veins assists those who are with child, and those giving birth."⁴⁶⁰ The Saraceni stone must have been especially potent, as Dolce notes, "[jasper] must be set in silver so that its virtues grow."⁴⁶¹ Together, coral pieces and branches, coins and jasper could make a powerful talisman for a woman trying to conceive, throughout pregnancy and during childbirth. Later, the items could be reassembled and reused to suit the needs of the new-born.

Maestro Francesco di Persici also had several items that may have once been combined to create an amulet for his only son, Francesco Maria, when the barber died in 1555. As discussed above, the post-mortem inventory lists: "a band [of fabric]; an

⁴⁵⁶ Klapisch-Zuber, "Blood Parents", 149-150; Musacchio, "Lambs", 139-141.

⁴⁵⁷ "Tre monete...L1-4 n° 3 pezzi di radicedi coralli e un corallo...Uno diaspro in argento", Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 445^v.

⁴⁵⁸ Knight, 122-124.

⁴⁵⁹ Knight, 119. Jasper, or bloodstone, was also commonly used for amulets worn to aid in childbirth and to protect children during the Middle Ages, as in figure 3.12. See Jeffrey Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 56 (January 1, 1993): 25-62; 32.

⁴⁶⁰ Dolce, *Libri tre*, 48^v.

⁴⁶¹ Dolce, *Libri tre*, 48^v.

Agnus Dei, a small broken turquoise; [and] a string of coral with silver buttons.”⁴⁶² Turquoise was long known for its protective properties, particularly saving those wearing it from falls,⁴⁶³ and the number of very small turquoise rings, likely worn by children, surviving today suggests the stone was thought to be particularly effective in keeping young people safe. For instance, the ring in figure 3.13, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, is tiny, with an internal diameter of only 1.3 centimetres, suggesting it was intended for a child.⁴⁶⁴ If combined, Persici’s items might have offered the wearer protection against not only falls, through the turquoise, but lightning strikes, haemorrhages and epileptic fits through contact with the coral and Agnus Dei.

Finally, the trousseau belonging to Diamante di Mazoli contained a combination of items that more closely resembles the charms and amulets given to Florentine children and depicted in images such as Detti’s *Madonna of the Pergola*. When she married Maestro Giovanni Battista Corrotti in 1590, Diamante brought into his home, “a tooth mounted in silver with a little key of silver and a silver coin called a *Christo impiede*, everything together.”⁴⁶⁵ Although this combination of objects did not include coral, which seems to have been common in Florentine amulets,⁴⁶⁶ it is preceded in the inventory by two strings of coral, perhaps used to suspend the tooth, key and coin.

Teeth, usually from dogs or wolves, seem to have been typical components of amulets for Florentine children and were usually mounted in metal so that they could be hung alongside coral, Agnus Dei and other objects. It was believed that when worn by nursing infants, teeth could protect them from harm and even encouraged the growth of their own teeth. This in turn would allow a child to be weaned sooner, shortening the time they required a wet nurse and saving parents money and having their child returned to them sooner.⁴⁶⁷ There is also evidence that teeth were used in rattles for young children, for both their protective powers and ability to encourage teething and reduce pain. Although extant rattles seem to usually have been made in England or Germany

⁴⁶² “una fasa piu uno agnus dei e piu una torchina rotta e piu una filza di corali co Botisele d'argento”, Notaio Sigurani (Persici).

⁴⁶³ Dolce notes it is particularly helpful for protecting those who fall from horses, in addition to other accidents. *Libri tre*, 64^v-65^r.

⁴⁶⁴ There are a number of very small turquoise rings in the Victoria Albert Museum, British Museum (Dalton cat. nos. 1902-04), the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Koln (cat. no. 248) and the Hashimoto collection.

⁴⁶⁵ “uno Dente legato in Argento con una chiavetta d'argento et una moneta d'argento chiamata uno Christo impiede ogni cosa insieme”, ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), 18 October 1590 (Dos D Diamanta di Mazolis)(no pagination).

⁴⁶⁶ See Knight, 114-120; Musacchio, “Lambs”, 152; Klapisch-Zuber, “Blood Parents”, 149-150.

⁴⁶⁷ Musacchio, “Lambs”, 153; *ibid.*, *Art, Marriage and Family*, 204; Knight, 116; Klapisch-Zuber, “Blood Parents”, 149-150.

(fig. 3.14), an unknown Italian artist's design for this children's toy suggests they were also found in Italy (fig. 2.1).

While the tooth in Diamante's charm perhaps had prophylactic properties, the purpose of the key and coin is less clear. The pair of chests in which her trousseau was brought to her husband's home are noted as having locks but also keys to go with them, and nothing else in the inventory seems to have required a key,⁴⁶⁸ suggesting a decorative or symbolic rather than practical purpose.⁴⁶⁹ Keys have not been discussed in studies of Italian amulets, though writing on the Austrian and Bavarian contexts, Ellen Ettlinger has noted that keys were long believed to have protective powers; they were placed in infant's cradles to protect them from the evil eye, children wore small silver keys on chains around their necks and held them in their hands to prevent epileptic episodes.⁴⁷⁰

In the Italian context, though not directly related to charms or amulets, in the 1603 edition of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, there is addition to the description of fidelity, which includes a key. He explains the role of the key as, "a sign of secrecy, in which one must keep of the things pertaining to friendship,"⁴⁷¹ and the accompanying woodcut shows a woman holding a key with a loyal dog at her feet (fig. 3.15). A key is also held by the personification of Fidelity in Giovanni Battista del Sole's etching from the 1645 chronicle describing the funerary ceremonies for Elizabeth, Queen of France and consort of Philip IV, King of Spain (fig. 3.16). As the key is found in Diamante's trousseau, it many connect to her successful passage into married life as a faithful wife. Further, the inclusion of what was probably a dog's tooth in the charm may have emphasised the bride's faithfulness.⁴⁷²

As with the role of the key in the amulet, the purpose of the *Christo impiede* is, today, uncertain. It may have been a coin, pseudo-coin or medal; minted in Bologna or

⁴⁶⁸ "uno paro d casse di noce con chiave e' chiavature", Notaio Zanettini (Mazoli). Perhaps, however, the key was for a small chest with pieces of jewellery given to Diamante as part of her counter-trousseau, as discussed in Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, Family*, 129.

⁴⁶⁹ Although Diamante's key does not appear to have been enamelled, there are several references to "chiavette smaltate" in Bolognese sumptuary laws, apparently worn on bracelets (Muzzarelli, "Bologna", 244; 246; 248). I have been unable to identify extant examples of this kind of jewellery.

⁴⁷⁰ Ellen Ettlinger, "The Hildburgh Collection of Austrian and Bavarian Amulets in the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum," *Folklore* 76, no. 2 (1965): 104–17; 111–112.

⁴⁷¹ Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Rome, 1603), 155.

⁴⁷² Sandra Cavallo has shown that some wives of artisans wore *clavacuore*, belts that featured, "a collection of small silver objects symbolic of female virtues and the woman's domain: keys, little scissors, a tiny case containing needles or a pomander filled with perfumed herbs." As the only item in common with Diamante's charm is the key, it is unclear if her collection of silver items was a *clavacuore*. Cavallo, "Artisan's casa", 66–75.

brought back from pilgrimage; contemporary or ancient;⁴⁷³ there is insufficient information provided in the inventory to tell. Coins and even pseudo-coins had been in use as protective amulets since ancient times, their value in terms of earthly exchange along with spiritual value, especially, by the Middle Ages, those with representations of Christ, the Cross or other religious imagery, made them particularly powerful talismans.⁴⁷⁴ Similar to Agnus Dei, carrying or wearing a coin or medal with holy imagery could perhaps offer close contact with and the protection of the divine against various dangers. Additionally, we have seen that in Florentine inventories and account books coins appear on their own and in combination with other objects as amulets for children, left with those abandoned but also included in swaddling at baptism.⁴⁷⁵ It is quite possible that the silver coin in Diamante's trousseau was included for its own talismanic or protective powers, perhaps linked to fertility, childbirth and children through its connection with the other protective items.

In sum, Diamante's amulet was part of her trousseau and might have been related to love, marriage and her roles as a dutiful wife; however, it also contained elements that can be linked to childbirth and childrearing. Perhaps when worn by the new bride the amulet provided protection against various dangers, but also signalled she was a faithful and industrious wife. Later, it may have been dismantled and reconfigured to suit the needs of the children she was expected to bear. It seems likely that Diamante's amulet and similar objects from other inventories were combined and reconfigured as necessary to meet families' changing spiritual and physical needs.

Conclusion

From religious rituals to magic talismans, parents in sixteenth-century Bologna employed a variety of tools to protect and care for their children. While there were some commonalities across the social spectrum, such as having infants baptised, wealthy families owned luxury items that announced not only their participation in such rituals but their economic and social status as well. The desire and ability to retain these expensive items at home would also have signalled social standing but in addition, may

⁴⁷³ Henry Maguire, in his study of magic and coins in the early Middle Ages, has suggested that in this much earlier period, a coin's perceived apotropaic powers increased with its antiquity. Henry Maguire, "Magic and Money in the Early Middle Ages," *Speculum* 72, no. 4 (October 1, 1997): 1037–54; 1041.

⁴⁷⁴ Maguire, 1039.

⁴⁷⁵ Knight, 123.

have reminded family members or visitors about particular events and individuals as in the instance of Maddalena Bianchetti's rosary and ring. At the same time, however, it seems some objects linked with children and spiritual care were given up, as we saw with the coral necklaces in the Bolelli inventory. This is a rare instance of an object not present in a household being recorded in an inventory and we rarely know about the goods a family may have once owned but had left or been removed from the home.

Likewise, it is difficult to know the future use of objects listed in inventories. This chapter, however, has demonstrated that there was great potential for the reuse of items like baptismal textiles passed to the next generation or the repurposing of coral, coins and Agnus Dei for mothers and, later, children. It was not uncommon for clothing, textiles and jewellery to be taken apart and remodelled to meet a person or family's changing needs. If an amulet a bride had in her trousseau proved to be powerful enough to help her conceive and safely give birth, perhaps it, or parts of it, would be seen as a potent tool for keeping her child safe and healthy. When that child and future children had grown out of an object or material it could be updated, pawned off or set aside.

As children grew older the appropriateness of different types of objects and materials may have changed, as discussed regarding coral, but this also meant that they could interact with objects in more complex ways. So far I have discussed how parents adorned their children or had rituals enacted upon them. In the next chapter I examine how religious images were employed within the home as a means of attending to the spiritual needs of children and their families.

Chapter 4: Devotional Images as Teaching Tools

This chapter examines the role of devotional images in children's education, upbringing and social formation within the context of the home. The first section provides an overview of the changes that occurred in the consumption of art within Bolognese homes in the second-half of the sixteenth century. While there were differences in the quantity and quality of images between poor and wealthy households, there were also commonalities, such as the popularity of representations of the Virgin and Crucifixion. The second section of this chapter looks at why these images, particularly of the Virgin and Child, might have been considered valuable tools in teaching children about the Christian faith. It then goes on to examine the ways in which images may have been employed to help children learn who important figures were, the words to key prayers and appropriate gestures to make. Imitation was an important means by which children learned, copying the words and behaviours of people in their environments but also what they saw in images. Therefore, pictures were considered useful for indoctrination, but also for teaching and reinforcing gendered roles and behaviours. As Section 3 demonstrates, representations of holy figures might teach children how to behave according to their gender and social class, but could be meaningful on a more personal or individual level as well. Although surely both male and female children were presented with representations of holy figures as role models, this section considers only the ways and which girls might have engaged with pictures in such a way. The inventories considered for this project offer little evidence of which male saints may have been commonly found in Bolognese homes, in contrast to many references to the Virgin and Saint Catherine, who were both proposed as exemplary figures for girls and women. The fourth section of this chapter explores how the production of holy images by children could help them to express their piety, education and skills they had honed. This final section also examines how the production of images was closely tied to gender and social class. Together, these sections show how important and complex children's relationships with devotional images were, and the ways that these relationships shaped and were shaped by social class, gender and age.

4.1 The Display and Acquisition of Devotional Images in Bolognese Homes

During the fifteenth century, cities such as Florence and Venice saw a vast increase in the number of devotional images acquired by middle- and upper-class families for

domestic use. This trend also occurred in Bologna, though it did not begin for another 150 years. Up to this point, wealthy Bolognese preferred to spend their money on architecture and frescoes, rather than panel paintings.⁴⁷⁶ Only after about 1570 was there a marked surge in the number of images, and particularly religious images, found in homes belonging to artisan, professional and noble Bolognese families.⁴⁷⁷ Part of the reason for this increase was related to the growing specialisation of domestic spaces and furnishings over the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; during this period families and individuals started to own more home furnishings and a greater variety of items more generally. Particular to Bologna was the election of Ugo Boncompagni as Pope Gregory XIII in 1572, which improved the city's relationship with Rome and offered financial benefits to many Bolognese families. This is discussed further in Chapter 6, though here it can be noted the raised profile of the city and many patrician families meant that there was more money that could and even needed to be spent on the construction and decoration of homes, which included painted pictures.⁴⁷⁸

Over this period there was also an increasing emphasis on the need to supplement church-based worship with prayer and meditation at home,⁴⁷⁹ in which pictures had long been key. Devotional images were sanctioned as tools for teaching the illiterate the fundamentals of the Christian faith going back as far as Pope Gregory the Great (590-604). Writing around the year 600 he explained: "What writing does for the literate, a picture does for the illiterate looking at it, because [they] see in it what they ought to do; [...Thus] a picture takes the place of reading."⁴⁸⁰ The didactic value of religious imagery persisted into the medieval and early modern periods, becoming an important and specifically Catholic practice with the endorsement of the final session of the Council of Trent in 1563.⁴⁸¹

Gabriele Paleotti (1522-1597), Bishop and later Archbishop of Bologna, played an important role in this last session of the Council and was a huge proponent of the use of

⁴⁷⁶ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 6-8.

⁴⁷⁷ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 12. For the Florentine context, see Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, "The Madonna and Child, a Host of Saints, and Domestic Devotion in Renaissance Florence," in *Revaluing Renaissance Art*, ed. Gabriele Neher and Rupert Shepherd (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 147-64; *ibid*, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 190-6; On Venice, see Morse, "Creating", 151-84.

⁴⁷⁸ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 4.

⁴⁷⁹ Patricia Rocco, "Maniera Devota/mano Donnesca: Women, Virtue and Visual Imagery During the Counter-Reformation in the Papal States, 1575-1675" (Doctoral thesis, City University of New York, 2014), 64.

⁴⁸⁰ Lawrence G. Duggan, "Was Art Really the 'book of the Illiterate'?" *Word & Image* 5, no. 3 (1989): 227-51, 227.

⁴⁸¹ Evangelisti, "Learning from Home", 667.

religious images as tools for instructing the intellect and, in his words, “[playing] the role of books for everyone.”⁴⁸² His *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane*, published in Bologna in 1582, explained the function and value of sacred images and gave recommendations on the most appropriate and effective styles and iconography to be used by artists. In addition to his treatise, Paleotti also gave sermons that extolled the value of devotional images when they were created and used properly,⁴⁸³ and even recommended they be given to children that attended catechism schools as prizes and rewards.⁴⁸⁴

This was all part of Paleotti’s mission to make Bologna the ideal Tridentine city,⁴⁸⁵ and was prescriptive rather than descriptive of the production and use of holy images; however, there is evidence that the citizens of Bologna heeded the Bishop’s advice. For instance, after 1570 there were a greater number of professional artists working in the city than ever before, with more contracts for images to adorn family homes and chapels.⁴⁸⁶ Although these kinds of commissions were the preserve of the wealthy, there were also religious images available for those of lesser means.⁴⁸⁷ Inexpensive woodcuts, prints and paintings could be purchased from shops and street vendors, such as the picture-seller depicted in Annibale Carracci’s *Vende quadri* as part of the *Arti di Bologna* series, drawn in the 1580s and printed by Simon Guilain in 1646 (fig. 4.1). Here an older man is shown carrying and even wearing a number of framed pictures for sale, the most prominent of which is an image of the Virgin and Child. Depictions of humble households also suggest that devotional images were present. A drawing attributed to Annibale Carracci (fig. 2.9), for instance, shows what appears to be a simple image of the Virgin and Child hung on the wall of an impoverished home.⁴⁸⁸

Like Paleotti’s treatise and sermons, Carracci’s drawings are not true reflections of everyday life in sixteenth-century Bologna; however, household inventories demonstrate not only that humble households featured devotional images, but also that

⁴⁸² Gabriele Paleotti, *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, trans. William McCuaig (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2012), 106.

⁴⁸³ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 31.

⁴⁸⁴ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 12. According to Raffaella Morselli, Bolognese collection of art does not occur in a major way until after 1630 (*Collezionisti e quadrerie nella Bologna del Seicento: inventari 1640-1707*, ed. Anna Cera Sones (Los Angeles: J Paul Getty Information Institute, 1998), 14).

⁴⁸⁵ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 12. On Paleotti, see Paolo Prodi, *Il Cardinale Gabriele Paleotti (1522-1597)* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1959).

⁴⁸⁶ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 12.

⁴⁸⁷ Evangelisti, “Learning from Home”, 669.

⁴⁸⁸ See a discussion of this image in Elizabeth Miller, “Prints,” in *At Home*, 322–31; 327.

more of these kinds of images could be found in households across the social classes towards the end of the century. For example, the only images listed in an inventory drawn up following the death of the nobleman Camillo Caccianemici in 1551 are: “some different sorts of paintings on copper”, kept in his wife's bedchamber.⁴⁸⁹ In contrast, the post-mortem inventory of the home belonging to Ludovico Caccialupi, a Bolognese knight drawn up in 1588, lists more than fifty painted pictures.⁴⁹⁰ This trend is also apparent in artisans' homes. For instance, Giovanni Battista di Fabri, a tailor, apparently had only an image of Saint Sebastian in his home after his death in 1553.⁴⁹¹ Twenty years later, an inventory drawn up listing the possessions of Domenico Fieravanti, a shoemaker, shows that his home featured “five large and small icons”.⁴⁹²

While inventories suggest that more households seem to have featured a greater number of images, they do not always provide the subject of the images, as in the Fieravanti and Caccianemici examples. These kinds of documents also rarely indicate when or why images came into a home. Studies of devotional art in Florentine homes have demonstrated that important life events including marriage and childbirth were key moments for the acquisition of images as recorded in household account books and diaries. Although these sources are not readily available in the Bolognese context, inventories of bridal trousseaux suggest that women often brought holy images into their marital homes. Additionally, when notarial documents give the subject of these images, it is nearly always the Madonna or some episode from her life. For example, when she married Gabriele Gozzadini in 1587, Margherita Serli had, “a picture with the image of the Blessed Virgin and other figures framed in walnut”.⁴⁹³ Artemisia Caprara brought to her marriage, “a large picture of the Annunciation framed in black and gold”, when she wed Camillio Chiari in 1582.⁴⁹⁴ Finally, Giulia Biondi, the daughter of a shoemaker, had an icon decorated with intarsia in her trousseau.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁸⁹ “Piu quadri di pinti di rami sorti per casa”, Notaio Sigurani (Caccianemici).

⁴⁹⁰ Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 347^v-365^r.

⁴⁹¹ Notaio Nobili (Fabri).

⁴⁹² “cinq anconino fra piccola e grande no 5”, Notaio Sigurani (Fieravanti).

⁴⁹³ “Prima Un quadre colla imagine della Beate Vergine e altre figure cornisato di Nose et un specchio di christallo cornisato di nose, quatro casse et un coffarino di noce per filate colle sue chiavature, Un quadretto per un tripiedi e, Una capretta, costano ogni cosa in tutto L120”, Notaio Passarotti (Margherita), 226^v.

⁴⁹⁴ “Una Nontiatà in u^o quadro grandò cornitato nero et oro”, ASB, *Archivio Caprara*, Serie II, 20, Scritture, inventarii e lettere 11 February 1582 (Signora Artemisia Caprara) (no pagination).

⁴⁹⁵ “Anchona furnitta intersiamo L29[;] Uno spechie furnitto intersiato L13”, ASB, *Notarile Pietro Zanettini*, 6/2 (1555-1605), f. 15, 18 April 1584 (Dos di Giulia) (no pagination).

Thus, women seem to have commonly brought devotional images, especially those featuring the Virgin, into their marital homes; however, men, may have also sought images of the Virgin for their households, as this is the image type most commonly found in household inventories. The inventories studied here suggest these images were available in a wide range of media including paintings on panel, canvas, leather and copper as well as prints, drawings, reliefs and sculptural figures. Most often, images of the Madonna are described as *ancone*, which Margaret Morse has suggested refers to the function of the image and the way it was displayed. As in figure 4.2, *ancone* may have retained the tabernacle-style frame of icons displayed in churches or perhaps were stored in a cupboard-like frame.⁴⁹⁶

Bolognese homes also featured a great number of Crucifixion scenes, in varied media and in two- and three-dimensions. The *palazzo* belonging to Count Filippo Manzoli, for example, had a number of images of or references to Christ on the cross: one Crucifixion scene was represented in an old *ancona*, another in “an old and torn painting” and a seemingly simple crucifix.⁴⁹⁷ The patrician Caccialupi family, too, had many versions of the Crucifixion: two painted on black and yellow satin and framed in pear wood and walnut, respectively; one in an old, unframed oil painting; an ivory Christ on an ebony cross; and a gilded cross with a Crucifixion for their chapel.⁴⁹⁸ Less ornate but surely no less powerful, Santo Marescotti, had two *ancone* of the Crucifixion, one painted on canvas and framed in walnut and the other painted and gilded.⁴⁹⁹ Notably, while many of the instances of images of the Madonna appear in the inventories of women’s trousseaux and as gifts given to them, none of the brides studied here seem to have brought representations of the Crucifixion into their marital homes.

While it may have been up to husbands and fathers to acquire crosses and Crucifixion scenes for domestic spaces, both men and women seem to have brought into the home and displayed in their chambers images of various saints. Unfortunately, inventories often list these images simply as *quadretti* or *imagine di santi*, making it impossible to know which figures were represented and if they were paintings, prints or something else. There are, however, a few instances where the name of the specific

⁴⁹⁶ Morse, “Arts”, 5 and 60.

⁴⁹⁷ The inventory lists: “Una ancona di crucifisso vecchia”; “Un quadro de crucifisso vecchio et strazzato”; and “Un crucifisso”, Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

⁴⁹⁸ “Un crocifisso fatto sul raso negro corniciato di pero, et tinto in negro[;] Un crocifisso sul raso giallo corniciato di noce”; “Un crocifisso a’ olio scorniciato et vecchio”; “Un crocifisso d’avorio su la croce d’ebano”; “Un croce dorata con un crocifisso”. Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 353^v-354^r and 358^v.

⁴⁹⁹ Notaio Sigurani (Marescotti).

saint is given, with figures such as Mary Magdalen, Peter, Paul, Catherine, Jerome and Sebastian appearing among various inventories.⁵⁰⁰ There are also instances of portraits of cardinals and popes as well as Old Testament figures, such as Judith.⁵⁰¹ Surprisingly, Saint John the Baptist is not mentioned in any of the documents, though representations of the Madonna and Child from Bologna dated to the second-half of the sixteenth century suggest that he, along with the Christ Child, were likely subsumed into listings of images often simply described as *una Madonna*.⁵⁰²

In sum, the inventories studied here suggest a preference for images of the Madonna and Crucifixion and to a lesser degree, those featuring other saints. Unfortunately, it is not until the seventeenth century that greater detail, in particular the name of the artist or figures represented, is included in Bolognese inventories.⁵⁰³ This suggests that in Bologna throughout the sixteenth century, the primary value of holy images was their ability to connect the believer with the divine, whether for protection, contemplation, education or other purposes.⁵⁰⁴ Indeed, throughout all of the inventories considered here, there is just a single instance where the name of the painter has been included, and this is discussed in Section 4.4 below.

Bolognese inventories also rarely include the room in which the listed items belong, making it difficult to know how and where images were stored and displayed. This sample also includes a few inventories that list objects according to their material, for example the Caccialupi family's images are all listed under a category called "framed pictures",⁵⁰⁵ which offers little indication of where and how the paintings were displayed. Other inventories, however, occasionally list the room in which images were found, or it can be inferred from the objects that precede and follow images. Based on this evidence, it seems that, as in Florence, the Bolognese may have generally preferred

⁵⁰⁰ For example, "Uno quadro tela depinta de la madalena cornisa L 0.3" in ASB, *Notarile*, Giacomo Cancellieri, 7/20 (1549-1579), 31 December 1558 (Inventario) (no pagination); "Un christo con s^{to} pietro" and "Un quadro di Mad^{na} con il Puttino e, Sⁿ Paolo et St^a Catherina corniato di noce de dorato", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 364^v. "S^{to} Hier^{mo} in un quadro con la cornise dorata nel camino L3" in Notaio Passarotti (Saraceni), 443^r & 446^v. For Saint Sebastian see Notaio Nobili (Fabri).

⁵⁰¹ For instance, "un quadretto ch vi e depinto il papa cornisato d nuce", appears in Notaio Sigurani (Marescotti). The cardinal and Judith were depicted in images in the Caccialupi home, "il ritratto del cardinal d'Augusta [Otto Truchsess von Waldburg (26 February 1514 – 2 April 1573), Cardinal of Augsburg]" and "Un quadro a' olio con una Giuditta corniciato di noce", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 353^v.

⁵⁰² Saint John the Baptist is named more frequently in later inventories, as is shown in Morselli, 529-530.

⁵⁰³ See Morselli, *Collezionisti*, 1-9. According to Fortini Brown, the situation was similar in Venice (*Private Lives*, 86).

⁵⁰⁴ For a discussion in the shift in the concept of art and the importance of the artist, see Motture and Syson, 268–83.

⁵⁰⁵ The family's "framed pictures" are listed in Appendix 2.

to keep their holy images in bedchambers, rather than in *sale* or more accessible spaces within their homes.⁵⁰⁶ Unlike in Florence, however, the sample inventories assign no images to chambers belonging to or obviously associated with children or young people, even in instances where they were known to have been in the home.⁵⁰⁷ This makes it difficult to know how and where Bolognese children interacted with domestic devotional images; however, considering those listed in the inventories in light of Gabriele Paleotti's *Discorso* and in relation to texts on childrearing from the period can offer a general idea of the relationships children were expected to develop with holy images. The examination of several specific examples in the later sections of this chapter helps to add further dimension to the understanding of how children may have engaged with and even created devotional images in the context of the late sixteenth-century Bolognese home.

4.2. “To delight, to instruct, and to move”: The Role of Devotional Images in Children's Religious Education and Practice

Household inventories suggest that Bolognese families seemed to prefer images with sacred over secular content for use and display within their homes. The Madonna was the most commonly represented figure within these images, followed by Christ and the saints. There is also evidence that in Bologna, as in other northern Italian cities, marriage was a key moment for the acquisition of holy images for domestic use. This section examines how devotional images functioned within the Bolognese home, especially in relation to childrearing and education.

Scholars have shown that images of religious figures and scenes could support practices such as prayer and meditation, helping the faithful to connect and build relationships with the divine.⁵⁰⁸ The possession and display of holy images could also protect the physical structure of the dwelling as well as its inhabitants from various

⁵⁰⁶ Musacchio has shown that although Florentines had devotional images throughout their homes, as in Bologna they seem to have been concentrated in bedchambers. In contrast, Morse has argued that Venetians preferred to display images, particularly of the Virgin throughout their homes. Musacchio, *Art, Marriage & Family*, 197-198 & Morse, “Arts”, 74.

⁵⁰⁷ Musacchio has found examples of devotional images in children's bedchambers and entries in personal account books that show parents acquired images specifically for their children (“Madonna and Child”, 149, 155).

⁵⁰⁸ Morse, “Creating”, 177; Geraldine A. Johnson, “Family Values: Sculpture and the Family in Fifteenth-Century Florence,” in *Art, Memory, and Family*, 215–33; Allison Lee Palmer, “The Walters’ ‘Madonna and Child’ Plaque and Private Devotional Art in Early Renaissance Italy,” *The Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 59 (January 1, 2001): 73–84.

dangers and communicated to visitors that it was a Christian home.⁵⁰⁹ Connected to the acquisition of devotional images around the time of marriage, and especially those featuring the Madonna and Child, was the belief that gazing upon beautiful, healthy infants was thought to encourage women to conceive the same.⁵¹⁰ Toward the end of a pregnancy, the same images might reassure women about giving birth, and later remind them of children away at the wet nurse.⁵¹¹ Finally, images featuring various holy figures could act as role models for observers, both children and adults, to whom they would impart information about gendered roles and behaviours, as is discussed in section 4.3.⁵¹²

Indeed, as we have seen, holy images had long been considered valuable teaching tools, not only with respect to comportment and virtue, but also as a means of indoctrinating the illiterate, both young and old. In late-sixteenth-century Bologna, children could learn the fundamentals of the faith at Schools of Christian Doctrine, which held catechism classes on Sundays and feast days and were open to boys and girls of all social classes. Images were important teaching tools within these schools, with works such as Ludovico Carracci's *Annunciation* (1583-84; fig. 4.3) and Lavinia Fontana's *Birth of the Virgin* (1590; fig. 4.4) commissioned specifically for spaces in which children's catechism classes took place.⁵¹³ Additionally, both male and female students at the Schools were given *piccolo immagini dei santi*, little prints or woodcuts of saints, as rewards for their achievements.⁵¹⁴ Once children returned home with their

⁵⁰⁹ Cooper, 192; Morse, "Creating", 152, 177.

⁵¹⁰ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 166-67. Also see Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, "Imaginative Conceptions in Renaissance Italy," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 42-60; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls: Play and Piety in Florence in the Quattrocento," in *Women, Family and Ritual*, 310-29; Geraldine A. Johnson, "Beautiful Brides and Model Mothers: The Devotional and Talismanic Functions of Early Modern Marian Reliefs," in *The Material Culture of Sex, Procreation, and Marriage in Premodern Europe*, ed. Anne L. McClanan and Karen Rosoff Encarnación (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 135-61.

⁵¹¹ Palmer has argued that images of the Madonna and Child could remind parents of children if they were away at the wet nurse or if they had died (p. 81). Also see Miller, "Parenting", 72.

⁵¹² There is a large body of scholarship on this subject. See: Erin J. Campbell, "Prophets, Saints, and Matriarchs: Portraits of Old Women in Early Modern Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (September 2010): 807-49; Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls", 320-323; Johnson, "Family Values", 215-233; *ibid.*, "Beautiful Brides", 135-161; Sara F. Matthews Grieco, "Models of Female Sanctity in Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy," in *Women and Faith: Catholic Religious Life in Italy from Late Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Gabriella Zarri and Lucetta Scaraffia (London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 159-75; Morse, "Creating", 151-84; Murphy, "Lavinia Fontana", 111-138; Musacchio, "Madonna and Child", 147-164; *ibid.*, "Imaginative Conceptions", 42-60; Palmer, 73-84.

⁵¹³ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 186.

⁵¹⁴ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 185.

immagini, however, it is difficult to know how they interacted with these and other images found within the domestic environment.

Literary sources such as biographies and diaries often describe children's zealous love for and use of holy images. For instance, Cesare Bianchetti (1584-1655), a Bolognese senator and the founder of the Congregazione di San Gabriele Archangelo,⁵¹⁵ is described in his biography as having his childhood tears subdued only by being offered, "little images of saints, that he avidly took and graciously kissed".⁵¹⁶ Similarly, though much earlier and in the Florentine context, the merchant Giovanni Morelli recorded in his diary how his son, Alberto, had held a panel with the image of the Virgin on his deathbed in 1406. Giovanni also noted that he himself later kissed and embraced an image of the Crucifixion, to which his son had prayed in life, in atonement for failing to arrange Alberto's last confession before his death.⁵¹⁷

Although they are fascinating, accounts like these must be considered with caution, as they may describe quite unusual behaviour, include details that are highly embellished or both. There was also much written on ideal treatment of and interactions with devotional images, and how images could be used to educate children; however, it is difficult to know if or to what degree families followed the prescriptions of moralists and churchmen. Indeed it seems that because interactions with holy images found within the home were so routine and learned from such a young age, there was little reason to document what people actually did on an everyday basis. But, comparing literary evidence with extant images and the information found in documents such as inventories indicates that it was at least possible to employ devotional paintings, prints and sculpture in the ways moralists recommended.

One of the most detailed pieces of advice about the use of images in childrearing comes from Giovanni Dominici, a Dominican friar writing in Florence between 1401 and 1403. Although his text is dated well before the period under consideration here, many aspects of Dominici's advice are echoed in sixteenth-century treatises on both visual art and domestic life.⁵¹⁸ Thus, Dominici offers a useful starting point for

⁵¹⁵ The original aim of the Congregazione di San Gabriele Archangelo was to provide manual labourers with a Christian education. See Victor Crowther, *The Oratorio in Bologna, 1650-1730* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 40.

⁵¹⁶ "Essendo negli Anni infantili, qualora davasi a piangere, per innocente debolezza delle umane passioni, non meglio potevansi trattener le sue lagrime, o acchetarne i finghiozzi, quanto con esporgli piccole Immagini di Santi, ch'egli avidamente predeva, e graziosamente baciava", del Frate, 9.

⁵¹⁷ Cooper, 194. On Morelli, see: Elizabeth Bailey, "Raising the Mind to God: The Sensual Journey of Giovanni Morelli (1371-1444) via Devotional Images," *Speculum* 84, no. 04 (October 2009): 984-1008.

⁵¹⁸ On this relationship see Evangelisti, "Learning from Home".

unpacking long-running and widespread ideas about the value of holy images as tools for educating children and how they might be employed as such. Although modern scholars frequently quote Dominici's advice, it is worth repeating here:

Have pictures of saintly children or young virgins in the home, in which your child, still in swaddling clothes, may take delight and thereby be gladdened by acts and signs pleasing to childhood. And what I say of pictures applies to statues. It is well to have the Virgin Mary with the Child in her arms, with a little bird or apple in His hand. There should be a good representation of Jesus nursing, sleeping in His Mother's lap or standing courteously before Her while they look at each other. So let the child see himself mirrored in the Holy Baptist clothed in camel's skin, a little child who enters the desert, plays with the birds, sucks honeyed flowers and sleeps on the ground. It will not be amiss if he should see Jesus and the Baptist, Jesus and the boy Evangelist pictured together; the slaughtered Innocents, so that he may learn the fear of weapons and of armed men. Thus it is desirable to bring up little girls in the contemplation of the eleven thousand Virgins as they discourse, pray, and suffer. I should like them to see Agnes with her little fat lamb, Cecilia crowned with roses, Elizabeth with roses on her cloak, Catherine and her wheel with other such representation as may give them, with their milk, love of virginity, desire for Christ, hate of sin, contempt for vanity, flight from sorry companions, and the commencement of contemplation, through consideration of the saints, the most Holy of Holies.⁵¹⁹

As just noted, there are a number of concepts in Dominici's advice that also appear in later texts on educating children as well as those on visual art and the use of images as didactic tools. For instance, Dominici suggests that there were specific figures as well as "acts and signs" that were not only appropriate for but also pleasing to children. Saints depicted in their youth, such as "the boy Evangelist", and flora and fauna including roses, lambs and birds would, in Dominici's opinion, "delight" small children. Later authors make similar claims. Silvio Antoniano, for instance, explains that images of the Madonna and Child featuring, "all manner of little childish things, by which that age is delighted," would help youngsters learn about the faith and encouraged interactions with devotional pictures.⁵²⁰ Similarly, though his work deals with viewers of holy images very broadly, Paleotti also notes that variety and novelty in style and content would bring the observer "pleasure and recreation". Various colours, textures, "diversity of embellishment... and other beautiful inventions", were especially useful for

⁵¹⁹ Dominici, 34.

⁵²⁰ Antoniano, 52a-52b.

“draw[ing] the eyes of the inexperienced” toward images.⁵²¹ This, according to Paleotti, was because delight was more easily “obtained by means of the senses when the object is suited and proportionate to them”.⁵²² Therefore, from at least the early-fifteenth and into late-sixteenth centuries, there were certain modes of representation and pictorial elements seen to be appropriate for particular viewers, including children, and a means by which they would find pleasure in images and thus better engage with them.

In addition to invention or novelty in images, familiarity could also cause a viewer to feel pleasure. As Dominici explained, youngsters would be gladdened by the sight of saintly children and young virgins, in whom they would see themselves “mirrored”. The idea that art imitating life could bring pleasure to a viewer persisted well into the sixteenth century. As Paleotti argued, viewers of “visually rendered thing[s]” felt, “great delight and taste in imitation, by a natural instinct”.⁵²³ Seeing familiar flowers, animals and spaces as well as figures like oneself depicted in images might bring pleasure, but these elements also made the image easier to relate to and thereby understand. Thus, art imitating life not only brought pleasure to the observer, but also, in theory, made it easier to relate to and therefore easier understand the subject matter depicted.

In addition to giving pleasure through novelty and familiarity, the figures, acts and signs found in devotional images were also symbols and mnemonic devices that supported learning and memorisation. For instance, the camel skin clothes of Saint John the Baptist and Catherine’s wheel mentioned by Dominici were not just intended to please small children, but were symbols that would have helped viewers identify who the figures were and recall their stories. And, these attributes remained important well into the sixteenth century. As Paleotti explains, “every saint has been assigned such an attribute not only to distinguish him from other saints but as the instrument of this glory and trophy of his victory over the world, and it must always accompany him.”⁵²⁴

Other elements found in devotional images, such as plants and animals were also important memory devices. For instance, the inclusion of roses, mentioned several times in Dominici’s advice, in various quantities and colours could serve to remind the viewer

⁵²¹ Paleotti, 312.

⁵²² Paleotti, 112.

⁵²³ Paleotti, 113. Paleotti also notes the power of images to “imprint” on the imagination of the viewer, notably because of their power to “catch the senses off guard and overwhelm them”. He uses the example of a fair-skinned woman delivering a dark-skinned infant and overcoming accusations of adultery because she had a similar-looking image in her bedchamber (p. 121).

⁵²⁴ Paleotti, 232

of the correct prayers to recite and the number of times they needed to be repeated.⁵²⁵ Similarly, Antoniano explains how the four points of the cross correspond with the words and gestures that compose the Sign of the Cross, and that this would help children to learn and memorise this essential prayer.⁵²⁶ Additionally, in his discussion of the importance of teaching children the Apostle's Creed, Antoniano notes the value of using illustrations in addition to text and parental explanation: "because the child learns with delight... [he] accepts [the Creed] and commits it more easily to memory".⁵²⁷

Thus, the correct kinds of images could give pleasure to a young viewer, encouraging and facilitating the memorisation and recitation of prayers. This, along with knowledge of saints, martyrs and their stories, would gradually help the child to connect with the divine. For instance, Antoniano argued that a father having his child,

[M]ake often and devoutly the sign of the Holy Cross, venerate the most Holy Crucifix and the Holy Images of the Mysteries of the Passion... and other similar things that ignite the heart and refresh the memory of the child, who, little by little will acquire a good disposition of thinking devoutly about the Passion of Christ.⁵²⁸

Thus, there was, ideally, a progression from looking at and being pleased by images and the figures, flowers and animals represented within them, to learning their meanings to practicing prayers and gestures. Writers such as Dominici, Antoniano and Paleotti offered prescriptions rather than descriptions of actual practices; however, contemporary images created for Bolognese homes often seem to align with prescriptive literature, suggesting that it was possible to use the images as authors such as Antoniano and Paleotti prescribe.

As noted above, although there are many devotional images listed in the inventories examined here, none are described in enough detail to know what kinds of "acts and signs" they may have featured. However, as we have seen, representations of the Virgin were extremely popular and found in households across the social classes. Though there is rarely specific information given about what type of Virgin is depicted and with whom, scenes of Mary (and sometimes other figures) adoring the sleeping

⁵²⁵ Quiviger, 42.

⁵²⁶ Antoniano, 55a-55b. Also see Evangelisti, "Learning from Home", 672-673.

⁵²⁷ Antoniano, 54b.

⁵²⁸ Antoniano, 37b-38a.

Christ Child were widespread in northern Italy during this period,⁵²⁹ and could be found in Bolognese homes. For instance, the 1611 inventory of the goods belonging to Giovanna Cortellini includes an image of “a little Saviour sleeping for the bed”.⁵³⁰

Although this reference cannot be linked to an extant image, one Bolognese version of this popular subject is Lavinia Fontana’s *Virgin Adoring the Sleeping Christ Child* (c. 1605-10; fig. 4.5), now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. This painting on panel is small (15.2 by 25.4 cm) and, based on the shape of the frame, was probably intended for display in a home and perhaps even to decorate a child’s cradle.⁵³¹ Here, just as Dominici recommended, the Christ Child is depicted sleeping before his mother, who is about to cover him with a thin blanket. Young viewers presented with this image may have felt pleasure at seeing a child similar to themselves engaged in an activity that they too would have been familiar with. In the background there is a curtain at the head of the small bed, composed of a bedstead, mattress, sheets, blankets and a bolster, the same items commonly listed in contemporary inventories and discussed in Chapter 2. These kinds of furnishings would have been familiar to children from wealthy Bolognese families, to which the painting likely originally belonged, given the high status of this artist and gilded frame. A familiar activity performed by a child in a recognisable setting may have made this image easier for children to relate to and hold in their minds. Additionally, the contrast between the dark background and luminosity of the Christ Child’s skin, adult and child, male and female correspond with Paleotti’s recommendation that images include diversity to “draw the eyes of the inexperienced”.⁵³²

Once a child’s eyes had been drawn and interested, a parent or nurse might use the image to supplement a verbal explanation of the names and significance of the figures represented, similar to what Antoniano suggested with respect to the Apostle’s Creed. Over time, the child would begin to remember who the figures were and perhaps stories or prayers associated with them. And, as a child matured and their knowledge grew, they may have begun to understand that the sleeping Saviour was a symbol of Christ’s

⁵²⁹ For a more in-depth discussion of these images in the Bolognese context, see Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 167-170.

⁵³⁰ “(un quadro di) un Salvatore piccolo, che dorme, dal letto”, ASB, Archivio Ranuzzi, sec. Cospi, Istrumenti, fol. 28, 61, “Inventario dei beni, e Mobili della Sig. a Giovanna Cortellini, Consegnati al Sig. Lorenzo Sala suo marito”. Cited in Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 167 n. 22.

⁵³¹ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 167.

⁵³² Paleotti, 312.

Passion, the blanket being drawn over him analogous to his burial shroud.⁵³³ This knowledge paired with the image might then “ignite the heart and refresh the memory”, encouraging the child to think “devoutly about the Passion of Christ,” as Antoniano recommended.⁵³⁴ Although the “joining [of] men to God” is what Paleotti describes as “the true and principal end demanded of [devotional] images”,⁵³⁵ representations of various saints also offered models for emulation. As Dominici’s advice indicates, male saints such as the Baptist and Evangelist were useful “mirrors” for boys, while female saints and virgins were appropriate for girls. Through the contemplation of these figures, children would learn and adopt not only “hate of sin” but gendered behaviours and virtues as well. These ideas continued from Dominici’s time into the period under consideration here, and the role of images of saints as exemplary figures for children and young people is discussed in the sections below. Here, however, it is necessary to briefly outline contemporary beliefs about how images worked to influence viewers, especially because of the important roles of pleasure and imitation, themes that run through this chapter.

As we have seen, holy images were intended to move or inspire observers, through pleasure or other emotions, to connect with and think about the divine; however, pleasure could also spark a desire to imitate what was depicted. In Paleotti’s words, “there is no doubt that seeing piously made images increases good desires and makes us abhor sin, arousing the compassionate wish to imitate the lives of those glorious saints whom we see represented.”⁵³⁶ Imitation could be related to piety and pious acts, but also to the performance of gendered roles and behaviours, as is discussed in the next sections.

This kind of imitation might, to some extent, be the observer’s choice or “wish”, but pictures could also cause changes in the viewer that they had less control over, “imprinting” on the mind and body. For instance, in his treatise Paleotti recounts a Greek tale of a woman accused of adultery after giving birth to a dark-skinned infant, a crime for which she was cleared because she had a similar picture in her bedchamber.⁵³⁷ Paleotti also tells of a man giving his wife a picture of a beautiful baby boy so that she

⁵³³ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 167. For a detailed discussion of this type of image as painted by Fontana, see pp. 167-171.

⁵³⁴ Antoniano, 37b-38a.

⁵³⁵ Paleotti, 111.

⁵³⁶ Paleotti, 106.

⁵³⁷ Paleotti, 121.

might conceive the same.⁵³⁸ In both instances, images were believed to have imparted physical characteristics onto unborn children by way of their mothers' gazes.

The belief in the power of images to transform the physical, mental and emotional state of viewers is not limited to the *Discorso*, nor to Bologna, but was long-held in Italy.⁵³⁹ Moreover, they did not just apply to pregnant women, but to children as well, who were often discussed as extremely malleable and easily imprinted with anything they saw or heard.⁵⁴⁰ Thus, images of exemplary figures could spark in the viewer a desire to imitate what was seen, but images could physically transform a person as well.

4.3. Mirrors of Countenance, Mirrors of Virtue: Exemplary Figures for Girls in Domestic Devotional Images

One of the most valued aspects of holy images was their ability to spark in the viewer devotion and a desire for imitation. The urge to imitate what was seen and heard was understood as particularly strong in children, as noted above, and authors of household treatises saw them as highly impressionable.⁵⁴¹ Antoniano, for instance, describes children's spirits as soft wax,⁵⁴² and similarly, Andrea Ghetti, in his 1572 text on childrearing, notes that children will take on any form with which they are impressed.⁵⁴³ Ghetti also describes a child's "tender mind" as "a little white panel...upon which you can make a drawing", which must be done with great care to ensure it is "a good and beautiful design."⁵⁴⁴ According to these and other authors, because children were so impressionable, it was essential that they only be exposed to exemplary figures, both in life and images.

The most important figure, according to authors of texts on raising good Christian children, was the father. In a chapter that expounds, "how the good paternal example is of the utmost importance", Antoniano explains:

[T]he first exemplar, where the eyes of young children naturally affix, is that of their own father, who, none other than a living mirror, must represent

⁵³⁸ Paleotti, 121.

⁵³⁹ For example see Musacchio, "Imaginative Conceptions".

⁵⁴⁰ For example see Ghetti, 7^r & 20^v and Antoniano, 133a.

⁵⁴¹ On the themes of children's malleability in Counter Reformation treatises, see Oliver Logan, "Counter-Reformation Theories of Upbringing in Italy," in *The Church and Childhood*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 275–84, esp. 283.

⁵⁴² Antoniano, 133a.

⁵⁴³ Ghetti, 20^r.

⁵⁴⁴ Ghetti, 7^r.

in himself all those forms and all those good qualities that he expects to impress upon the child.⁵⁴⁵

Similarly, Giovanni Leonardi advocates that fathers offer their children “living lessons”, noting that they must not only *not* do or say “sinful or ugly things”, but must do and say “virtuous and good things,” as a means of presenting a “clear and limpid mirror” to their children.⁵⁴⁶ The mother of the family, too, was an important figure, “as a mirror of virtue in which all the house is reflected,”⁵⁴⁷ and even siblings could and should be role models. As Leonardi explains, good brothers could be offered up “as a mirror” drawing on the example of the sons of Job. Although they “were seven in number” and unlike “in countenance and face” they were one in spirit and heart, “similar and unanimous in the concordance of the mind and communion of piety.”⁵⁴⁸

As in life, children were to be exposed only to images of exemplary figures that would inspire appropriate behaviours and beliefs. Moralists and pedagogues most often recommended the Virgin as a role model for both children and adults. Antoniano, for instance, emphasised that devotion to and emulation of the Virgin this was absolutely essential for girls,

[T]o whom this highest queen must be proposed as a mirror, and exemplar of humility, and of every virtue, and to her one must particularly recommend virgins and married women, as she alone is virgin and mother, glory, ornament, and crown of the female sex.⁵⁴⁹

Antoniano’s description of the Virgin as a mirror is not unique, and can be found in prescriptive literature as early as the fourteenth-century. Paolo da Certaldo’s text from the 1360s, for example, gives the Virgin a prominent place in the home and particularly in relation to the rearing of female children. He explains: “The young virgin female must live according to the example of the Virgin... who was queen and mirror to

⁵⁴⁵ Antoniano, 28b-29b.

⁵⁴⁶ Leonardi, 78.

⁵⁴⁷ Leonardi, 143. For a discussion of mothers as mirrors of conduct in the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-centuries, see Ajmar, “Women as Exemplars”, 194-197.

⁵⁴⁸ Leonardi, 196.

⁵⁴⁹ “Et se questo conviene di fare ne i figliuoli maschi, molto maggiormente si doverà dare melle femine, alle quali questa altissima regina deve esser proposta per specchio, et esemplare di humilità, et d’ogni virtù, et à lei particolarmente le verginelle, et le maritate, devono raccomandarsi, come quella che sola è vergine, et madre, gloria, ornamento, et corona del sesso femminile.” Antoniano, 52b.

all the other virgins.”⁵⁵⁰ Jacobus de Voragine’s *Sermones aurei* (c. 1460) also describes the Virgin as a mirror and associated glass with her purity:

She is called a mirror because of her representation of things, for as all things are reflected from a mirror, so in the blessed Virgin, as in the mirror of God, ought all to see their impurities and spots, and purify them and correct them: for the proud, beholding her humility see their blemishes, the avaricious see theirs in her poverty, the lovers of pleasures, theirs in her virginity.⁵⁵¹

Although these pieces of advice are not necessarily descriptive of real behaviours and should be taken figuratively rather than literally, the inventories considered here offer evidence that there were images of the Virgin associated with actual mirrors. The earliest example is found in the 1560 post-mortem inventory of Filippo Manzoli’s home, which lists “a gilded icon of the Madonna with [a] large gilded mirror”.⁵⁵² Similarly, when she married Gabriele Gozzadini in 1587, the inventory of Margherita Serli’s trousseau lists as the first two items: “a picture with the image of the Blessed Virgin and other figures framed in walnut and a crystalline glass mirror framed in walnut”.⁵⁵³ The “large picture of the Annunciation framed in black and gold” in Artemesia Caprara’s trousseau of 1582 is also the very first entry, which is immediately followed by “a large mirror framed similarly.”⁵⁵⁴ Likewise, the first two items listed in the inventory of the trousseau belonging to Giulia Biondi are an icon and a mirror, both decorated with intarsia.⁵⁵⁵ Maddalena Bianchetti also brought an image of the Madonna and a similarly framed mirror into Ludovico Caccialupi’s home when the couple married in the 1560s; the inventory of the goods given to Maddalena by her father lists, “a picture of the Madonna and Child and Saints Paul and Catherine framed in gilded walnut” followed by “a large steel mirror framed similarly.”⁵⁵⁶ These examples range

⁵⁵⁰ P. da Certaldo, *Il libro*, no. 300, pp. 121-22. Quoted in Ajmar, “Women as Exemplars”, 180.

⁵⁵¹ Quoted in James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*, Second edition (Boulder: Westview Press, 2008), 600.

⁵⁵² “Una ancona di madonna dorata con il specchio grande dorate con le liste di veluto carmesino”, Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

⁵⁵³ “Prima Un quadre colla imagine della Beate Vergine e altre figure cornisato di Nose et un specchio di christallo cornisato di nose, quatro casse et un coffarino di noce per filate colle sue chiavature, Un quadretto p[er] un tripiedi e, Una capretta, costano ogni cosa in tutto L120”, Notaio Passarotti (Margherita), 226^v.

⁵⁵⁴ “Una Nontiatia in u^o quadro grandio cornitato nero et oro[;] Un specchio grandio cornitato il simile”, *Archivio Caprara* (Artemisia).

⁵⁵⁵ “Anchona furnitta intersiamo L29[;] Uno spechie furnitto intersiato L13”, Notaio Zanettini (Giulia).

⁵⁵⁶ “Un quadro di Mad^{na} con il Puttino e S^t Paolo et S^ta Catherine corniato di noce de dorato; Un specchio d’aviaro grande corniciato al simile”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 364^v. There was at least one other mirror in the Caccialupi home: “Un specchio con la cavretta” (360^v).

from the mid- to late-sixteenth century and across the social spectrum; it seems women from both noble and artisan families brought images of the Madonna that were somehow related to mirrors to their marital homes: Maddalena Bianchetti was the daughter of a knight and senator from a noble and ancient Bolognese house while Giulia Biondi was the daughter of a shoemaker, for example.

These objects in themselves are not unusual trousseau goods; as scholars have shown, Florentine brides often brought devotional images and figures to their husbands' homes as well as convents, if they took holy vows.⁵⁵⁷ Mirrors were also commonly found in Florentine trousseaux, and along with items such as combs, ribbons and jewels, appear to have, for the most part, been intended to help the bride make herself attractive.⁵⁵⁸ Mirrors with frames featuring beautiful women, like those in figures 4.6 and 4.7, might have been especially appropriate gifts, encouraging women to accept and aspire to the ideals around feminine beauty (discussed further below).⁵⁵⁹

It is unclear whether Florentine mirrors were linked in some way with devotional images,⁵⁶⁰ but the Bolognese examples beg the question: what was the viewer, presumably the bride, meant to see or do while looking in the mirror, especially one “framed similarly” to an image of the Madonna that she may have just been engaged with and that might be very nearby? The inventories give a general description of the content of the devotional images (all but one are noted as featuring the Madonna) and, in some instances, how they and the mirrors were framed; however, it is difficult to know how these pairs of objects were displayed or related to each other, which would have impacted the ways they were used. Perhaps they evolved from objects like that in figure 4.8, where the Virgin and Child are represented on one side of a heavy bronze base with a mirror on the other. This configuration, where the base was possibly attached to a stand that swivelled or was framed and displayed on a wall, would have protected the delicate surface of the mirror when not in use. With the Virgin and Child on one side and a mirror on the other, the holy figures, likely a point of focus during

⁵⁵⁷ See, for example: Klapisch-Zuber, “Holy Dolls”, 310–29; *ibid.*, “Griselda”, 213–46; Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, “The Bride and Her ‘Donora’ in Renaissance Florence,” in *Culture and Change: Attending to Early Modern Women*, ed. Margaret Lael Mikesell and Adele F. Seeff (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), 177–202; Palmer, 73–84.

⁵⁵⁸ Musacchio, *Art, Marriage & Family*, 165.

⁵⁵⁹ For further discussion about this type of mirror frame, see *Art and Love*, 226; Syson and Thornton, 52; Musacchio, *Art, Marriage & Family*, 165–167; Cavallo, “Health”, 177–178.

⁵⁶⁰ In her study of devotional images in early modern Venice, Margaret Morse notes “the gilded picture of the Madonna and a mirror that it contained” in “the camera d’oro of Gerolamo Bianco, son of the notary Francesco”, but no other information is offered about this intriguing entry (“Arts”, 54).

devotional practice, would be hidden or at least turned away when the mirror was being used to apply make-up, for example.⁵⁶¹

It seems more likely that the paired mirror and icons developed from the objects like that in figure 4.9, where various panels were pulled out from the side of an elaborate frame (fig. 4.9a). The first was usually painted with an image and removed to reveal a mirror, also on panel and removable as well. The way the religious images and mirrors are described in the inventories, however, suggests they were not physically combined or at least not combined in this way.⁵⁶² The use of the term *ancona* in four of the eight examples might suggest the image was framed similar to the mirror in figure 4.10 and the *Holy Family* in figure 4.2. The mirrors “framed similarly” to the icons may have been comparable to the tabernacle-style mirror frame now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (fig. 4.10) or like that in figure 4.9, just without the image panel.

The mystery of how these objects were related to each other and displayed makes it difficult to understand how they were used. This understanding is further clouded by the complex and conflicting use and symbolism of mirrors in early modern Italy along with the belief they were quasi-magical and even dangerous objects.⁵⁶³ One of the most negative associations mirrors had was with vanity. Carlo Caliarì’s *Allegory of Vanity*, c. 1586-1596 (fig. 4.11), for example, depicts a young woman gazing into a mirror as she arranges her hair, her reflection juxtaposed with that of the skull held up by her attendant. Making the warning against vanity even clearer, Enea Vico’s mid-century engraving also features a young woman gazing into a mirror (fig. 4.12), here with the inscription, “I am lighter than the breeze and more empty than a slender shadow”.⁵⁶⁴ Mirrors were also an attribute of Venus and frequently appear in representations of the goddess at her *toilette*, as in Nicoletto da Modena’s engraving from the early-sixteenth century (fig. 4.13) and Annibale Carracci’s *Venus Adorned by the Graces* (fig. 4.14). The connection between Venus and the mirror is made again in a seventeenth-century image of the goddess painted onto a pane of glass (fig. 4.15), and another, also from the seventeenth-century (fig. 4.16), that seems to have functioned like that in figure 4.9, with the image panel removed to reveal a mirror below.

⁵⁶¹ John Hungersford Pollen, *Ancient and modern furniture and woodwork in the South Kensington Museum* (London, 1874), 185-7.

⁵⁶² Additionally, this kind of frame with multiple panels are thought to have hidden erotic scenes or portraits of mistresses. See *Art and Love*, 225-226.

⁵⁶³ Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 236-237.

⁵⁶⁴ “SUM LEVIOR VENTIS TENUI QUOQ INANIOR UMBRA”, see figure 4.12.

In addition to their association with vanity and Venus, mirrors were also attributes of female beauty, as described in the 1603 edition of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*. He explains that the mirror is included as an attribute of feminine beauty because "it is likewise a mirror" in which one can see their true self.⁵⁶⁵ Also connecting mirrors with knowledge is Giulio Bonasone's engraving of the emblem of Wisdom for the 1574 edition of Achille Bocchi's *Symbolicarum quaestionum*, printed in Bologna. Bonasone represents a young woman also looking into a mirror searching, perhaps, for truth rather than beauty (fig. 4.17), as the inscription on the frame of a mirror dated c. 1530 (fig. 4.18) advises: "Not beauty but truth is to be admired."⁵⁶⁶

The truth that could be revealed by mirrors and their usefulness as a tool of introspection corresponds with the object's inclusion in personifications of Prudence from the beginning of the fifteenth century.⁵⁶⁷ Cesare Ripa explains in the 1603 version of his *Iconologia* that the mirror signifies the necessity of knowing and correcting one's flaws in order to act with prudence (fig. 4.19). The personification, holding a mirror, is also represented in the drawing *Two Infants between Justice and Prudence* by an unknown Bolognese artist at the end of the sixteenth century (fig. 4.20), as well as Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving from the beginning of the century (fig. 4.21).

The relationship between mirrors, beauty, introspection and truth leads us back to the Virgin as *speculum sine macula*, or spotless mirror, and the Bolognese examples. While the brides' mirrors alone might assist with their beautification, whether coming from a place of vanity or desire to show closeness to the divine, the apparent similarities between these objects and *ancone* suggests they played a role in devotional practice, introspection and self-improvement. Perhaps after meditating on or before an image of the Virgin, a woman might gaze into her mirror, comparing herself, in terms of both body and virtue, to that "highest queen". Seeing herself "framed similarly" might encourage introspection and the discovery (and correction) of faults, helping the viewer

⁵⁶⁵ John Pope-Hennessy, *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, volume I: Text (London: HMSO, 1964), 271. Although he quotes the 1630 version of Ripa's *Iconologia*, the mirror is also part of the description of the emblem for feminine beauty in the 1603 edition (pp. 42-43). Ripa further explains that seeing oneself in "greater perfection" in the mirror that is women's beauty ignites a love for the image and in so a love for the actual thing being "seen more perfect." This corresponds with the contemporary idea that portraiture could improve upon nature's mistakes by idealising a woman's physical features discussed above, turning images of real women into ideals. See Mary Rogers, "Sonnets on Female Portraits from Renaissance North Italy," *Word & Image* 2, no. 4 (1986): 291-305; 297.

⁵⁶⁶ This is the translation of inscription, which is difficult to make out in reproductions, provided by the Metropolitan Museum of art: "NON / FORMA / SED / VER / [ITAS / MIR] ANDA / EST".

⁵⁶⁷ Cavallo, "Health", 178; Hall, 601.

to draw connections between herself and the spotless mirror, the Virgin.⁵⁶⁸ Whatever the process or processes may have been in terms of the use of the mirror and icon, it seems plausible and even likely that they were learned early on in life. As noted above, prescriptive texts often advised parents to provide mirrors of conduct for their children, both living and in images, and some sixteenth-century Bolognese families seem to have had materials, both images and mirrors, to put this advice into action.

In addition to the Virgin, moralists recommended other female figures as role models for girls. Dominici, for instance recommended representations of the eleven thousand Virgins as well as Saints Agnes, Cecilia, Elizabeth and Catherine for young girls, as was discussed above; however, it is only this last saint that appears in the inventories studied here and who was also identified as an exemplary figure by sixteenth-century writers. According to her legend, Catherine of Alexandria, beautiful, chaste and extremely learned, was born to a fourth-century pagan king. Converted to Christianity and baptised by a hermit, Catherine refused to take a mortal husband and instead, after a vision sparked by a devotional image, entered into a mystical marriage with Christ, preserving her virginity. At age 18 Catherine admonished the emperor Maxentius for forcing Christians to worship pagan idols and, as a result, was challenged to and won a debate against fifty philosophers. Having converted the men to Christianity through her eloquence, Catherine was sentenced by Maxentius to death on a mechanism with spiked wheels, one of her best-known attributes. Through divine intervention, the wheel broke before she could be put to death. Later, however, Catherine was beheaded with a sword, another of her attributes, and milk rather than blood was said to have sprung from her wound and her body eventually was carried by angels to Mount Sinai.

Marta Ajmar has demonstrated that Catherine was promoted as an exemplary figure in prescriptive literature in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, though the saint's advanced education was troubling to some. Authors writing in the late-fifteenth century, such as Iacopo Foresti and Agostino Strozzi, put the saint forward as a model for female learning and praised her for preserving her virginity. Juan Luis Vives and Ludovico Dolce, however, writing in the sixteenth century, used Catherine to show that female

⁵⁶⁸ The similarities between these objects also have implications for our understanding of early modern decorative schemes, which this thesis cannot address due to limitations of space. On this subject see Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interiors*, 341. Having a mirror and image framed in the same way may also have helped to signal that they belonged together, were items associated with marriage and often the property of the bride.

learning did not necessarily compromise chastity, but that her eloquence, celebrated by Foresti and Strozzi, was not necessary or even appropriate for contemporary women.⁵⁶⁹ Instead of her learning, then, sixteenth-century writers tended to highlight Catherine's chastity, faith and beauty as worthy of emulation by young women.

Catherine was also a popular figure in devotional images, with scenes of her mystical marriage appearing to have been more common than those of her disputation.⁵⁷⁰ Although Diane Owen-Hughes has attributed the popularity of these images to the increased number of patrician women consigned to convents over the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,⁵⁷¹ Marta Ajmar and Margaret Morse have demonstrated that Catherine also appears frequently on Tuscan and Venetian objects and images associated with courtship and marriage,⁵⁷² suggesting she was also a role model for lay women.⁵⁷³ The image of Saint Catherine belonging to Maddalena Bianchetti, also appears to have been related to marriage, as she brought it to her husband Ludovico's home when the couple married in the 1560s. This example helps to elucidate the idea of the saint as an exemplary figure for young women in the context of the Bolognese home. It also demonstrates that devotional images shaped religious practices as well as familial and perhaps even individual identity.

The 1588 post-mortem inventory of the goods belonging to Ludovico Caccialupi also includes a list of items belonging to his wife, Maddalena including gifts she had received over the course of their marriage, as discussed in Chapter 2 and items from her bridal trousseau. One entry in this list describes a picture of the Madonna and Child with Saints Catherine and Paul framed in gilded walnut, given to Maddalena by her father when she was married.⁵⁷⁴ Although the inventory does not explain which Catherine is featured, it was probably Saint Catherine of Alexandria and her mystical

⁵⁶⁹ Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 226-230. Also see Marta Ajmar, "Exemplary Women in Renaissance Italy: Ambivalent Models of Behaviour?" in *Women in Italian Renaissance Culture and Society*, ed. Letizia Panizza (Oxford: Taylor Institution, 1998), 244-64.

⁵⁷⁰ In and around Bologna there are a number of altarpieces that feature Catherine's disputation, for example Prospero Fontana's work at San Domenico and Francesco Cavazzoni's altarpiece for Santa Maria Maggiore in Castel San Pietro Terme, about 30 kilometres south-east of Bologna.

⁵⁷¹ Diane Owen Hughes, "Representing the Family: Portraits and Purposes in Early Modern Italy," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17, no. 1 (1986): 7-38; 28.

⁵⁷² Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 229; Morse, "Arts", 291.

⁵⁷³ Rafaela Morselli's work shows that paintings of the saint by artists working in the sixteenth century such as Francesco Albani, Parmigianino, Orazio Samacchini were commonly found in seventeenth-century Bolognese homes. She notes 27 images of Saint Catherine (though this could be Catherine of Alexandria, Siena or even Bologna) (pp. 534-35); 22 images of *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* (p. 535); and 11 of the *Virgin and Child with Saint Catherine* (p. 520).

⁵⁷⁴ "Un quadro di Mad^{na} con il Puttino e, Sⁿ Paolo et St^a Catherina corniato di noce de dorato", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 364^f.

marriage to Christ that is depicted. Representations of this saint were found in seventeenth-century Bolognese homes much more frequently than those of Catherine of Siena or Bologna and similarly, today there are more extant images of Catherine of Alexandria than the other Catherines.⁵⁷⁵ Finally, this picture was given to Maddalena on the occasion of her wedding, and as just noted, objects related to courtship and marriage that feature the saint tend to privilege her mystical marriage to Christ rather than other scenes from her legend. The presence of the Madonna and *puttino* in Maddalena's picture are also suggestive of this scene.

Although Maddalena's painting cannot be linked with an extant image, examples of Catherine's mystic marriage may give some indication of what it might have looked like. For instance, a painting from the workshop of Francesco Francia shows Catherine's mystical marriage with saints Mary Magdalene and Paul looking on (c. 1510-1540; fig. 4.22). Additionally, Parmigianino's unfinished painting on panel shows the Christ Child seated on his mother's lap, placing a ring on the finger of the youthful saint (fig. 4.23). To the viewer's right is a bearded male figure holding a book, possibly Saint Paul. This work is dated c. 1527, the period during which the painter was working in Bologna and is considered a variant of Raphael's *Madonna and Child with the Infant Baptist*, now in the London's National Gallery but painted for the Bolognese Aldobrandini family between 1509 and 1510 (fig. 4.24).⁵⁷⁶

Similar to what Margaret Morse has suggested for Venetian brides, upon her marriage to Ludovico Caccialupi, a picture of Saint Catherine's mystical marriage to Christ might have lent a sacred aspect to Maddalena's union.⁵⁷⁷ Later, the close and loving bond between the Child and saint may have encouraged the new mother to develop a similar bond with her own children,⁵⁷⁸ or reminded her of that bond while they were away at the wet nurse.⁵⁷⁹ Of greater interest to this study, however, is how Maddalena and Ludovico's children might have engaged with the image. At the time the inventory was drawn up, the couple had three sons, Carl'Antonio, Giovanni and Cesare, aged 20, 13 and 8 respectively.⁵⁸⁰ They also had at least three daughters,

⁵⁷⁵ See note 573 above.

⁵⁷⁶ Cecil Gould, *Parmigianino* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 215-16.

⁵⁷⁷ Morse, "Arts", 291.

⁵⁷⁸ Morse, "Arts", 291.

⁵⁷⁹ Palmer, 81 and Miller, "Parenting", 72.

⁵⁸⁰ Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 347^v.

Ludovica and Maria Maddalena whose ages are unknown but had taken holy vows 1 May 1578,⁵⁸¹ and Laura, who was 15 and preparing for marriage.⁵⁸²

As discussed in the previous section, certain pictorial styles, figures and elements were believed to be particularly suited to children. Although what Maddalena's painting looked like is unknown, sixteenth-century depictions of Catherine typically show her as young and beautiful, and also include her wheel, an attribute deemed necessary by Paleotti, as discussed earlier. While these elements may have helped viewers to remember the saint, her legend, virtues and martyrdom, they may have also helped Maddalena's daughters relate to, or see themselves "mirrored" in Catherine. Although they were of lesser social status than the aristocratic saint, coming from a patrician family, the Caccialupi sisters would have been expected to wear expensive clothing and jewellery, especially as brides or when entering the convent.⁵⁸³ Similar to Catherine, they also may have had access to higher learning, as is discussed in the next chapter, furthering their connection to the learned saint.

For Maddalena's daughter Laura, who was preparing for her marriage to Stefano Alamandini, the image may have functioned similarly to the way it had, or was intended to function, for Maddalena, giving a spiritual quality to her marriage.⁵⁸⁴ Prior to entering the convent, Maddalena's other daughters, Ludovica and Maria Maddalena, might have related more directly with Catherine's mystic marriage, perhaps having been reassured and encouraged to take the veil, especially as they took vows at the convent of Santa Caterina in Bologna's Strada Maggiore.⁵⁸⁵ Like Laura, the two girls may have

⁵⁸¹ The sisters' signed professions of faith are held in Bologna's Archivio di Stato, *Demaniale*, Santa Caterina.

⁵⁸² I have been unable to find Ludovica and Maria Maddalena in the city's baptismal registry, though there is an entry for Laura, who was baptised 6 October 1572. AAarch, *Registri Battesimali*, 1571-1573, v. 28, 209^v. Laura was to marry Stefano Alamandini soon after her father's death, and the couple's first child was born 5 May 1589. Baldasare Carrati, *Registri battesimali di Bologna* (1580-89), Biblioteca comunale dell'Archiginnasio, MS B860, 268.

⁵⁸³ Kate Lowe has suggested that the rituals and even clothing was quite similar for sacred and secular brides. See "Secular Brides and Convent Brides: Wedding Ceremonies in Italy during the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation," in *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650*, ed. Trevor Dean and K. J. P Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 25-40.

⁵⁸⁴ See note 573 above. It is notable that the rise of popularity of images of Catherine's mystical marriage seems to run somewhat parallel to the transformation of marriage from a social or legal act to that of a sacrament under the control of the Church after 1563. See Trevor Dean and K. J. P Lowe's introduction to *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1-24; also see Anthony F. D'Elia, *The Renaissance of Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge, Mass; London: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁵⁸⁵ The religious community was founded by the Bolognese noblewoman Barbara Orsi in 1522 and moved into the space on Strada Maggiore in 1524, which had formerly been inhabited by Benedictine monks. Marcello Fini, *Bologna sacra: tutte le chiese in due millenni di storia* (Bologna: Edizioni Pendragon, 2007), 43.

seen themselves “mirrored” in the beautiful, youthful saint, which perhaps encouraged them to adopt like behaviours and attitudes towards chastity and devotion.

While these two possible interpretations, encouraging both secular and sacred marriages, seem to be at odds with each other,⁵⁸⁶ the presence of Saint Paul might explain how they could co-exist. Considered the author of the Epistles, Paul’s statement that, “it is better to marry than to burn” (1 Corinthians 7), was often appropriated by early modern writers on marriage.⁵⁸⁷ From this perspective, it was better to remain celibate, as those destined for a convent would, but, if this was not possible, marriage was an acceptable and even necessary means of avoiding damnation, especially for women. Furthermore, Paul is known to have expounded that wives were subject to their husbands’ authority,⁵⁸⁸ and perhaps his presence in Maddalena’s painting was intended to encourage or even imprint onto brides temperance, chastity and obedience to their husbands, whether celestial or terrestrial, an idea commonly found in early modern treatises on the family and marriage.⁵⁸⁹ Saint Paul’s presence may have also have served to temper viewers’ desires for advanced female learning, for which Catherine of Alexandra was known. Paul was, and still is often cited as justification for denying women leadership roles in the Catholic Church. For instance, moralists such as Antoniano specifically name Paul as support for their belief that women and girls needed to be silent both in- and outside of the Church.⁵⁹⁰

In sum, Maddalena’s picture of the Virgin and Child with Saints Catherine and Paul would have likely served a range of purposes within the home. The painting would have supported devotional practices within the home, offered protection to the dwelling and its inhabitants from different sorts of dangers and indicated that this was a Christian household. But the image may also have played more specific roles for different members of the household, reassuring Laura about her marriage to Stefano Alamandini but also Maria Maddalena and Ludovica in their unions with Christ at the convent of Santa Caterina. The Caccialupi sisters would have been expected to obey their

⁵⁸⁶ While the roles women took on as wives were very different from those who became nuns, Lowe has demonstrated the similarities between the two different types of weddings throughout the Italian peninsula both before and after the Council of Trent. See “Secular Brides”, 25–40.

⁵⁸⁷ For example see D’Elia, 39.

⁵⁸⁸ He was often cited to support the ban on women preachers, as well. See Alcuin Blamires, “Women and preaching in medieval orthodoxy, heresy, and saints’ lives”, *Viator*, 26, 1995: 135-152.

⁵⁸⁹ See, for example, the brief discussion on wives being ruled by husbands in Ajmar, “Women as Exemplars”, 49-50 as well as Gabriella Zarri, “Christian Good Manners: Spiritual and Monastic Rules in the Quattro- and Cinquecento,” in *Women in Italian Renaissance Culture and Society*, ed. Letizia Panizza (Oxford: Taylor Institution, 1998), 76–91; 80.

⁵⁹⁰ Antoniano, 105a.

husbands, whether human or divine, and embrace chastity and modesty, perhaps highlighted by the presence of Saint Paul in the painting.

Many of the suggestions for the ways that Maddalena's picture might have functioned as "a mirror of virtue" hinge on knowledge about the Caccialupi family and would not have applied to all viewers of images of Saint Catherine. However, these suggestions demonstrate that various and multiple meanings could be conflated within a single image or even a single figure within an image. For girls and young women, female saints could be exemplars of virtue, learning and piety but perhaps also have more familial or personal significance depending on the beholder. Importantly, some religious figures, like Catherine of Alexandria, had legends with aspects that were not ideal, at least according to some. For example Catherine's refusal of marriage to a man in favour of Christ would not have been acceptable behaviour for a patrician young woman, at least from a parental perspective.⁵⁹¹ Although parents were ordered not to force children into marriage or religious life against their will, daughters, especially those from elite families, had little say in whether they would marry or take the veil and husbands were usually chosen by male relatives, again with little or no input by the future bride.⁵⁹² Finally, as we have seen, Catherine's erudition might have been seen by some as inappropriate for young women and not something for them to aspire to at all. In sum, there were many, even conflicting ways in which images of Saint Catherine and other religious figures acted as role models for young viewers, perhaps both easing and potentially interfering with the transition through the early life stages.

4.4. Learning to Draw, Learning to Sew: Children's Artistic and Devotional Practices

While pleasure could be had from the contemplation of images, it could also be derived from the production of images. For instance, in his treatise on the rearing and education of noble boys and young men, Alessandro Piccolomini recommends that between the ages of 10 and 14, noble boys begin to learn the figurative arts, which were said to delight both the senses and the intellect. The skills developed through this kind of education would help young men later in life when, as heads of households, they would

⁵⁹¹ See Trevor Dean, "Fathers and Daughters: Marriage Laws and Marriage Disputes in Bologna and Italy, 1200-1500," in *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650*, ed. Trevor Dean and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 85-106; Owen Hughes, 10-11; Jutta Sperling, "Marriage at the Time of the Council of Trent (1560-70): Clandestine Marriages, Kinship Prohibitions, and Dowry Exchange in European Comparison," *Journal of Early Modern History* 8, no. 1/2 (February 2004): 67-108.

⁵⁹² Dean and Lowe, 1-24; Owen Hughes, 10-11.

need to distinguish the beautiful from the ugly and the proportionate from the deformed in the acquisition of goods for their families and homes.⁵⁹³ In addition to the valuable skills and pleasure that could be gained from drawing and painting, the creation of images of a religious nature could be an act of devotion. As Paleotti explains, “to undertake to make a sacred image is a task of special significance,” which required not only confidence, but divine assistance.⁵⁹⁴

Although Paleotti's text refers to professional artists and Piccolomini is offering advice rather than a description of common practices, there is some evidence that children from patrician and wealthy families learned to draw and paint for pleasure or as a sign of status rather than as training for a future career. Bologna's Accademia degli Ardenti, for example, which only accepted boys from noble families between the ages of 10-12, taught Latin grammar, writing, singing, dancing as well as drawing, under the tuition of the “master of drawing”.⁵⁹⁵ Additionally, the Bolognese painter Francesco Cavazzoni wrote a manuscript dedicated to Count Roderico Pepoli in 1612 offering the *gentiluomo* step-by-step instructions on “the noble art of drawing”, which he also associated with delight.⁵⁹⁶ Fathers may also have entered the costs for tutors of drawing or painting in domestic account books or diaries, as well as those for music, dancing or fencing lessons, though few of these sources survive from sixteenth-century Bologna. A remarkable entry in the inventory of the Caccialupi household, however, shows that at least one of the children in this family received lessons in drawing and painting.

In addition to the list of items belonging to Maddalena Bianchetti, the inventory drawn up in 1588 includes numerous paintings ranging from large to small, on paper, panel and canvas, and subject matter from portraits to landscapes to *ancone*. Despite the great number of images the family had at their home in Bologna and villa in Maccaretolo, there is only one instance, here and throughout all of the other inventories studied in fact, where the creator of a work is named. Within the list of the Caccialupi's framed pictures, is noted: “a Madonna painted in oil on panel by the hand of Floriano, [Ludovico's] son.”⁵⁹⁷ The inclusion of the artist here is significant; clearly, that Floriano made the painting was important to the family, who would have had to tell the notary by

⁵⁹³ Piccolomini, 59^{r-v}. Also see Evangelisti, “Learning from Home”, 668-69.

⁵⁹⁴ Paleotti, 123.

⁵⁹⁵ *Capitoli dell'Accademia de gli Ardenti di Bologna* (Bologna, 1610), 6-7.

⁵⁹⁶ Francesco Cavazzoni, *Esemplario della nobile arte del disegno per quelli che si dilettono delle virtù, mostrando a parte per parte con simetria...* (1612) Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna MS 330.

⁵⁹⁷ “Una mado^{na} olio in assa fatta per man del sig^r floriano suo fig^{lio}”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 354^r. While “suo figlio” is admittedly vague, the most logical attribution would be to Ludovico, as this is an inventory of his property and belongings (347^v).

whom the picture was painted. Perhaps including the name of the painter signals pride in his workmanship, though it is given neither quantitative nor qualitative value.⁵⁹⁸ The type of Madonna depicted is also not described, in contrast to the Madonna of Loreto, Madonna of the Column and Annunciation also in the family's possession.⁵⁹⁹ Finally, although Floriano's age at the time the painting was created is not provided, as we have seen, it was recommended that artistic training begin between the ages of 10 and 14. Given that Ludovico and Maddalena had been married for around twenty years,⁶⁰⁰ the painting had probably been produced a few years prior to the inventory.⁶⁰¹

Although the production of this painting was likely part of a noble education, which provided skills useful later in life, given the subject matter it would also have been a lasting expression of Floriano's piety and devotion. As noted above, according to Paleotti, to create a holy image required confidence as well as heavenly intervention. The role of divine assistance in the production of religious images, particularly of the Madonna, is seen in the form of angels or a vision often represented in contemporary images of Saint Luke painting the Virgin (fig. 4.25). The patron saint of painters and with guilds often named after him, Luke was said to have created the first and only authentic image of the Virgin and Child. Many icons in the early modern world were attributed to Luke, including that at the Sanctuary of San Luca just outside Bologna's city walls (fig. 4.26). The image, now known to have been painted in the twelfth-century, arrived in Bologna in 1160 and beginning in 1433, under the direction of the confraternity of Santa Maria della Morte, was brought in procession from the sanctuary on Guardia Hill through the city streets annually, but also at times of war, plague, famine and for important civic events.⁶⁰² The detail of an illumination from the confraternity's statutes dated to 1562 (figs. 4.27 - 4.28) shows the miraculous image being escorted from the hill-top sanctuary towards the city walls. Indeed, devotion to the icon remained strong into and beyond the sixteenth century, and Floriano would

⁵⁹⁸ This is typical of the inventory. The only painting that is described in terms of quality is "il ritratto del sig^{re} Cavalier lud^{co} solo abbozzato et scorniciato", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 353^v.

⁵⁹⁹ "Una Madona di loreto d'oro da mettere in un cappello" (Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 351^r), "Un ritratto della Mad^a della colonna di S. Pietro di Roma... Una mad^{na} in disegno dell'Anno^{tiata} co li misteri della corona" (364^r). The Caccialupidi did however, have several nondescript Madonnas in their homes as well. See Appendix 2.

⁶⁰⁰ The couple's eldest living son, Carl'Antonio was baptised 16 November 1567 (AArch, *Registri Battesimali*, 1567-1568, v. 26, 41^r).

⁶⁰¹ I have been unable to find entries for Floriano, Maria Maddalena or Ludovica Cacialupi in Bologna's baptismal register; however, they may have been born at the family's villa in Maccaretolo and baptised elsewhere.

⁶⁰² Nicholas Terpstra, *The Art of Executing Well: Rituals of Execution in Renaissance Italy* (Kirkville: Truman State University Press, 2008), 133.

certainly have known about if not seen it at some point, especially as his father, maternal grandfather and three maternal uncles were members of the elite confraternity.⁶⁰³

Whether Saint Luke and the icon on Guardia Hill influenced the young painter or not, Floriano's image would have been considered both an artistic and devotional exercise, marking his reverence for and connection to the Madonna. Furthermore, the display of the painting in the family's home would have advertised Floriano's exemplary learning, skill and piety, offering an example for his siblings to follow and aspire to, and perhaps suggesting the time and money that his parents had invested in his education. This was a wealthy family that could afford to have its children educated in drawing and painting not as a future career, but as a source of pleasure, learning and devotion.

The complex and changing roles that images played in the home and the evolving relationships between images and inhabitants, both children and adults, is highlighted by the fact that in 1588 Ludovico and Maddalena did not have a son called Floriano. The text preceding the post-mortem inventory names Ludovico's three sons: Carl'Antonio, age 20; Giovanni, age 13; and Cesare, age 8.⁶⁰⁴ While it is possible that Floriano was a natural son from an extramarital relationship, it seems more likely that he was born to Ludovico and Maddalena and had died at some point prior to 1588 when the inventory was drawn up. Bologna was ravaged by the plague in the late 1580s, and this was a period where losing a child to illnesses and accidents was, sadly, not at all uncommon.⁶⁰⁵ While this painting, as a devotional image, would serve the spiritual functions already discussed, might have represented Floriano's piety or painterly prowess or both, and offered an example of exemplary learning and behaviour, it would also have acted as a reminder of the son and brother who had died.⁶⁰⁶ Perhaps the family's close and continued connection of the painting with Floriano made him, or

⁶⁰³ *Matricola della Compagnia dell'Ospedale di Santa Maria della Morte, del secolo XVI* (1555), Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Fondo speciale Ospedali, n. 41; 12^r, 17^r, 33^{r-v}, 38^v, 40^r, 41^r. His maternal grandfather, Cesare Bianchetti, was a magistrate for life (1^v).

⁶⁰⁴ Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 347^v.

⁶⁰⁵ Amidst war, plague and famine, Bologna's population declined from 72,000 in 1581 to 60,000 in 1597. Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 3. Also see Morselli, 12. For general trends in Bologna's sixteenth-century population, and difficulties with data from the late medieval and early modern periods for the city, see Athos Bellettini, *La popolazione di Bologna dal secolo XV all'unificazione italiana* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1961), 22-30.

⁶⁰⁶ Neither the Caccialupi nor any of the other inventories I have consulted list portraits of children, despite the growing popularity of this genre, across Northern Italy and in Bologna. See Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 174-184 and Marian A. Methenitis, "More than Mirrors: Portraits of Children in Renaissance Italy" (Doctoral Thesis, The University of Texas at Dallas, 1995).

rather his memory, present in the home,⁶⁰⁷ as a reminder of a lost family member and the need to pray for his soul.

While this instance of a painting by a young person within a family home might not be representative of common practices in terms of both education and the display of images within domestic space, it highlights the very personal relationships and meanings that developed between inhabitants and devotional images. Similarly, it shows that domestic devotional practice could take various forms and be expressed in meaningful and enduring ways. Although it is uncertain how frequently households may have featured paintings by children or other family members, devotional images and texts were often given as gifts or passed down through the generations, accumulating memories and specific associations over time.⁶⁰⁸ An image of the Madonna and Child or various saints might protect the inhabitants of a home, aid devotional practices, teach fundamentals of the faith and offer models of exemplary behaviour but also keep the memory of family members alive, whether they had been consigned to a convent, as with Maria Maddalena and Ludovica Caccialupi, or had passed on, as with their brother, Floriano.

Although some boys learned to draw and paint either as a trade or a noble pastime, girls were less likely to learn these skills. As with music, singing and dancing, the figurative arts were often learned with male tutors, putting the honour of girls and their families at risk,⁶⁰⁹ however, Bologna was unusual, if not singular in that the city produced a number of professional female artists working outside of the convent. Properzia de' Rossi (c. 1490–1530), a Bolognese sculptor, was the only woman that Giorgio Vasari discussed at length in his *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (1550).⁶¹⁰ Born and working in the sixteenth century, Lavinia Fontana (1552–1614), who was trained by her father, Prospero, received prestigious commissions for

⁶⁰⁷ Palmer has argued that images of the Madonna and Child could remind parents of children if they were away at the wet nurse or if they had died (p. 81), and I would argue this piece functioned in a similar manner.

⁶⁰⁸ Silvia Evangelisti has suggested that objects belonging to nuns and returned to their families when they died functioned somewhat like relics, having been associated with a holy person. See her “Monastic Poverty and Material Culture in Early Modern Italian Convents,” *The Historical Journal* 47, no. 1 (March 1, 2004): 1–20. 20.

⁶⁰⁹ Antoniano, 158a. Also see Dennis, “Music”, 235–237. Drawing from nude models was inappropriate even for professional female artists. Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 21

⁶¹⁰ See Vera Fortunati and Irene Graziani, eds., *Properzia de' Rossi: una scultrice a Bologna nell'età di Carlo V* (Bologna: Compositori, 2008).

altarpieces and, more often, for portraits.⁶¹¹ Later, in the seventeenth century, Elisabetta Sirani (1638-65), also trained by her father, Giovanni Andrea, had a very successful, though brief, career as a painter.⁶¹² Apart from women that were daughters or wives of artists, however, there is little evidence of drawing or painting lessons provided to girls and young women for pleasure or as a sign of status.⁶¹³

We do have much more evidence, though, that female children, especially those from the upper classes, were taught to sew and embroider, such as extant examples of handiwork, sewing tools, pattern books and inventories that describe these items.⁶¹⁴ While these were practical and even necessary skills, as is discussed in Chapter 6, they could also be used to create Christian symbols and pictures of holy figures. For instance, a sampler made by Giulia Piccolomini in the early-seventeenth century shows her ability to work in many different stitches and patterns, and includes the letters of the name of Christ as well as crosses and lilies (fig. 4.29). This is not to say that the creation of sampler like this was necessarily an act of devotion, but women could use their skills with needle and thread to apply these designs and symbols to garments and accessories for themselves and family members as a means of offering them divine protection. As was discussed in chapters 2 and 3, extant examples of swaddling bands are stitched with crosses, lilies and the letters IHS to lend infants divine protection.

Moralists also recommended that girls and unmarried young women create clothes and garlands with which to decorate statues of the Virgin as a means of connecting and engaging with the important figure.⁶¹⁵ Additionally, representations of the Holy Family and the Annunciation, such as figure 4.30, frequently feature sewing baskets in the foreground, which suggests the Virgin Mary has stopped her work to receive God's message through the Archangel Gabriel or to read Holy Scripture.⁶¹⁶ Perhaps even working on textiles unrelated to devotional practice or without Christian symbols girls and women could still feel a connection to the divine and in particular to the Virgin, whom moralists recommended as a particularly important exemplary figure

⁶¹¹ See Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*; Vera Fortunati, *Lavinia Fontana of Bologna, 1552-1614* (Milan: Electa, 1998); Maria Teresa Cantaro, *Lavinia Fontana bolognese "pittora signolare", 1552-1614* (Milan: Jandi-Sapi, 1989).

⁶¹² See, for instance, Adelina Modesti, *Elisabetta Sirani: una virtuosa del seicento bolognese* (Bologna: Compositori, 2004).

⁶¹³ Lavinia Fontana may have provided drawing and painting lessons to noble Bolognese girls. See Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 14-16; 20-24.

⁶¹⁴ See Chapter 6 of this thesis.

⁶¹⁵ See Ajmar's discussion of di Dio's text in "Women as Exemplars", 142-3.

⁶¹⁶ Rocco, "Maniera Devota", 59.

for both “virgins and married women, as discussed above”.⁶¹⁷ As they worked they may have recalled images of and likened themselves to the Virgin with a basket of sewing at her feet. Additionally, the repetitive nature of simpler types of needlework perhaps enabled girls and women at work to enter a meditative state, moving their minds contemplation or some other devotional practice.

Although girls may have been less likely than their brothers to draw or paint religious images, they could still use their skills and the objects within their environments to create their own connections to holy figures. Having the time and resources, though, for learning and practicing these pursuits as well as the materials they required, from silk and gold thread to oils paint and brushes, was surely the preserve of the wealthy. Children from more humble households may have been expected to work to contribute to the household income, rather than spending time and money learning to embroider or paint for leisure or pleasure. Nevertheless, it took little time or practice to sew a simple cross, to scratch one into ground or to make the Sign of the Cross as children were instructed to do, “before beginning any good work”.⁶¹⁸ Thus, those from less-affluent backgrounds could also create images, even if only through gesture, as a means of expressing their devotion and interacting with the divine.

Conclusion

From about the mid-1570s, more Bolognese homes had a greater number and variety of images, especially those that supported domestic devotional practices. These helped members of the household connect with the divine, offered protection from various dangers and signalled that it was a Christian dwelling. Holy images could also support children's religious education, helping them to learn who important holy figures were, the words to key prayers and the gestures and comportment that demonstrated devotion and reverence. Emotional responses to holy images, especially delight or pleasure, could encourage children and young people to imitate the behaviour depicted, both in terms of expressions of piety but also gender-specific virtues and behaviours. Depending on their gender and social class children could develop and demonstrate an intimate and personal relationship with religious figures and scenes, which helped them

⁶¹⁷ Antoniano, 52a-52b.

⁶¹⁸ *Psalterio*, 13^r. On children scratching crosses into the ground or furniture see Haas, *Renaissance Man*, 139.

to learn their place in the family and society more broadly. Children and young people could also express their devotion, learning and skill in visual forms, keeping their own memory alive once they had left the home, whether temporarily or more permanently. Thus, the devotional images found within the early modern Bolognese home were powerful objects with which children developed complex and meaningful relationships.

Chapter 5: Reading and Writing in the Early Modern Bolognese Home

Today, we generally understand literacy as having the ability to read and write or not. In early modern Italy, this concept was much more complex. In part this was due to the use of modes of reading that are obsolete today, but also because of the influence of Latin on Italian language and culture; some people were fluent in Latin while others might recognise a few words in the vulgate and others still were completely unable to read or write. Thus there were a range of literacies and reasons that these skills might need to be developed, as the first section of this chapter explores. There were also various possibilities for how or where a person might learn to read or write, though the earliest stages of this kind of education could take place at home under the guidance of a parent or caregiver, as is considered in Section 2. As the third and fourth sections of this chapter demonstrate, Bolognese households featured many tools to support reading and writing, from primers for those just starting out to legal treatises for the Latin-literate, and books “for writing” to pen and inkstands. Together, the sections of this chapter show that a child's gender and social class, among other factors, were integral to their interactions and relationships with these objects.

5.1. Issues of Early Modern Literacy

In Italy during this period, Latin was the language of the learned, in which the ability to read and write was the preserve of a small percentage of the population. Thus, many religious, legal and medical texts as well as treatises on poetry, history, the arts and philosophy were incomprehensible to all but a relative few. Although the ability to fully read and write in the language was uncommon, there was a sliding scale of Latin literacy, from the fluent *letterati*, to *non idioti*, *idioti* and *plebe*, who were completely Latin-illiterate.⁶¹⁹ This range of abilities was, at least in part, because Latin was so prevalent in sixteenth-century Italian society and culture. Although it was the language of the learned, it was also the language of religion; the prayers read at mass, recited in daily life and found in common prayer books were in Latin.⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁹ According to Anne Jacobson Schutte, these were the terms commonly found to describe levels of Latin literacy in the early modern period. “Teaching Adults to Read in Sixteenth-Century Venice: Giovanni Antonio Tagliente’s *Libro Maistrevole*,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 17, no. 1 (1986): 3–16, 11, note 30. These terms, particularly *letterati* and *idioti* are found in household and pedagogic treatises, such as Antoniano's, for instance (p. 168b).

⁶²⁰ Grendler, *Schooling*, 148-152. Also see Richardson, 107.

Seeing, hearing and reciting the words to these prayers regularly meant they were often remembered by heart, allowing some of the faithful to achieve what R.N. Swanson has described as “passive literacy”: the recognition of written words based on memory and experience that could prompt specific actions, such as the recitation of a prayer.⁶²¹ Furthermore, if a person knew the basics of reading (the letters of the alphabet, the sounds of the syllables and some words), they might have been able to follow along if presented with printed texts they had committed to memory.⁶²² Thus, while only a few could read, write and comprehend Latin, because it was the language of religion and prayer, many would recognise key words by sight and sound, even if they did not fully understand what they meant.⁶²³

Just as there were a range of abilities and uses for reading and writing Latin, there were also different degrees to which people were literate in the vernacular. Some could read and write fluently, others were completely illiterate and many probably fell somewhere between these two extremes; unfortunately, literacy levels in this period are difficult to measure. Ideally, and according to post-Tridentine moralists and churchmen, all of the faithful, both male and female, needed to be able to read at least at a very basic level so that they understood Christian Doctrine and could clearly and correctly recite their prayers.⁶²⁴ In practice, however, many people were unable to read and even more were unable to write.

Although religious ideals drove the need to “alphabetise” the masses, social class and gender were the most significant factors that determined if or to what level one learned to read and write.⁶²⁵ Silvio Antoniano, for instance, likened the city to the human body in order to explain the relationship between social class and literacy. In his words:

[T]he city is like a body composed of various members that have various operations and offices more and less noble, though all necessary... and if all the body was only of one noble member... it would no longer be a body. [Likewise, the city] needs many manners of men and that they do different

⁶²¹ R.N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c.1215 - c.1515*, Cambridge Medieval Textbooks (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 79. See Morse, “Arts”, 309-310 on the importance of this kind of learning in Venice.

⁶²² Virginia Reinburg, *French Books of Hours: Making an Archive of Prayer, C. 1400-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 108.

⁶²³ Reinburg, 108.

⁶²⁴ Turrini, 425 and 429; Grendler, *Schooling*, 338-339; Evangelisti, “Learning from Home”, 667.

⁶²⁵ Evangelisti, “Learning from Home”, 668; Richardson, 110. Grendler, *Schooling*, 46-7.

jobs, as do the peasants, artisans, merchants and many others; for not all can, nor should be *litterati*.⁶²⁶

In the opinion of Antoniano and many of his contemporaries, only those of a certain social class should learn to read and write Latin, depending on the role they were to play in society. With respect to reading and writing in the vulgate, however, all Christian men but those from the most humble backgrounds needed to learn these skills, at least in Antoniano's opinion.⁶²⁷

If social class dictated the level to which boys were educated, it was even more crucial in determining the extent of girls' education.⁶²⁸ According to Antoniano, for example, noble girls should learn to read and write well with knowledge of basic arithmetic; middle-class girls should be able to read and write a little; and girls from humble families only needed to know how to phonetically read prayers.⁶²⁹ It is important to highlight here that noble and middle-class girls' reading and writing skills were to be only in the vernacular; rarely did moralists and pedagogues advise that girls learn Latin.⁶³⁰

In part, these class distinctions were related to the future roles girls were expected to play, especially as wives and mothers. The heads of patrician and merchant families, for instance, were often away on diplomatic missions or for business, and their wives might be expected to step in and take over some of the domestic responsibilities, such as keeping household accounts and records. Because of the age difference between men and women at marriage, wives might outlive their husbands and, in cities such as Bologna and Florence, could be named guardians of their minor children, a role in which they might be responsible for arranging their children's education.⁶³¹ Finally, Gabriele Paleotti strongly encouraged Bolognese noblewomen's involvement in girls' classes at the city's Schools of Christian Doctrine, where laywomen taught reading skills.⁶³² Thus, because they might need to be able to read and write as part of their

⁶²⁶ “Che la Città è come un corpo composto di varie membra, che hanno varie operationi, & offitii più, & meno nobili, ma però tutti necessari al sostentamento del corpo, & se tutto il corpo fosse un membro solo più nobile, come per esempio fusse tutto occhio, già come Alpostolo dice, non saria più corpo. Hor applicando la similitudine al nostro proposito, non ha dubbio che la comunità civile per conversarsi, ha bisogno di molte maniere d’huomini, & che facciano differenti esercitii, come sono contadini, artigiani, mercanti & molti altri, per il che non tutti possono, ne debbono esser litterati”, Antoniano, 153a.

⁶²⁷ Antoniano, 153a.

⁶²⁸ Ajmar, “Women as Exemplars”, 197-199.

⁶²⁹ Antoniano, 153b. Also see Grendler, *Schooling*, 89.

⁶³⁰ Grendler, *Schooling*, 88.

⁶³¹ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 147.

⁶³² Turrini, 447; Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 5.

duties later in life, girls from upper-class families were more likely to be taught to read, and to a lesser extent to write, than their social inferiors.⁶³³

Additionally, wealthy families had more resources to devote to educating their daughters. Tutors could be brought into the home, but this required money and space. But, because tutors were typically male, this kind of arrangement put a girl's honour at risk. Therefore, the best teacher for a girl was considered to be her mother, or "another woman that is of an honest and good life," in Giovanni Leonardi's words.⁶³⁴ But even if a mother or female family member did not have to be paid like a tutor, the time she spent teaching, even informally, took away from her work around the house or other kinds of labour, which may have produced much needed family income. Her pupil, too, may have been needed for work deemed more important than learning to read.⁶³⁵ Finally, if a mother did not know how to read, she could not teach her child; as some scholars have suggested, after social class, a girl's level of literacy was most heavily influenced by the degree to which her mother had been educated.⁶³⁶

Thus, there were fewer opportunities for girls to learn to read and write fluently than for their brothers, as additional resources were required to teach them these skills, which could put honour at risk, and they were deemed to be unnecessary for much of the female population. In comparison with the great number of books, diaries, letters and other documents written by and for men, there is much less physical evidence of women's reading and writing abilities. Together, these factors have led modern scholars to suggest dismal literacy rates for women across the social spectrum in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy.⁶³⁷ Some have also suggested that even if girls learned to read, it was a skill soon lost after marriage.⁶³⁸ Although literacy rates for both men and women in the past are difficult to measure, these conclusions typically rely on a modern, and in

⁶³³ Grendler, *Schooling*, 101.

⁶³⁴ Leonardi, 152. Also see Grendler, *Schooling*, 96-97.

⁶³⁵ Olwen H. Hufton, "Istruzione, lavoro e povertà," in *Monaca, moglie, serva, cortigiana: vita e immagine delle donne tra Rinascimento e Controriforma*, ed. Caroline P. Murphy, Sabina Brevaglieri, and Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Florence: Morgana, 2001), 48-101; 49-56.

⁶³⁶ Joan Gibson, "Educating For Silence: Renaissance Women and the Language Arts," *Hypatia* 4, no. 1 (March 1, 1989): 9-27; 15.

⁶³⁷ In opposition to this idea, see Meg Lota Brown and Kari Boyd McBride, "Education and Work," in *A Cultural History of Women, Volume 3, In the Renaissance*, ed. Karen Raber and Linda Kalof (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 143-62.

⁶³⁸ Luisa Miglio, "Leggere e scrivere il volgare: sull'alfabetismo delle donne nella Toscana tardo medievale," in *Civiltà comunale: libro, scrittura, documento* (Genova: Nella sede della Società ligure di storia patria, 1989), 357-83; 364.

so quite narrow, view of literacy.⁶³⁹ As discussed above, in the early modern period there was a spectrum of abilities in terms of reading and to a lesser extent, writing. Additionally, there were modes of reading that are obsolete and even forgotten today, such as the ability to read prayers phonetically. Taking a broader view not just of female literacy but literacy more generally, as scholars have done in studies of other parts of Europe,⁶⁴⁰ presents greater possibilities for the ways in which people learned and were able to read and write. In turn, seeing literacy in shades of grey rather than in black and white also opens up more possibilities for meaningful interactions between readers and texts, both in the sense of physical books but also written word.

5.2. Learning to Read

Schooling and education in medieval and early modern Italy have been well studied, and from extant curriculum, teachers' professions of faith, treatises and other documents, we know, in general terms, how pupils were taught to read and write, how they learned Latin grammar, arithmetic and so on.⁶⁴¹ There is much less evidence about how people learned to read in more informal environments; however, it is likely that many of the same techniques and teaching tools used in schools were also employed to teach literacy skills in the home or workplace. As is discussed below, there was adherence to age-old teaching methods and a tendency to teach others to read and write

⁶³⁹ As Michael Clanchy explains, for example, "the significance of personal prayer books goes far beyond the question of whether their owners were literate or not" as they allowed users to take a persona, active and imaginative role in their devotion ("Images of Ladies with Prayer Books: What Do They Signify?" in *The Church and the Book: Papers Read at the 2000 Summer Meeting and the 2001 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. R.N. Swanson, Studies in Church History 38 (Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, N.Y: The Boydell Press, 2004), 106–22; 113). Suzy Knight has also raised this point in her doctoral thesis (pp. 37–38).

⁶⁴⁰ Many of these studies focus on Books of Hours and highlight, too, the roles these texts played as part of as well as beyond devotional practices. See Susan Groag Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture," *Signs* 7, no. 4 (July 1, 1982): 742–68; Pamela Sheingorn, "'The Wise Mother': The Image of St. Anne Teaching the Virgin Mary," *Gesta* 32, no. 1 (January 1, 1993): 69–80; J. P. Harthan, *Books of Hours and Their Owners* (Thames & Hudson, 1977); Alexandra Walsham, "Jewels for Gentlewomen: Religious Books as Artefacts in Late Medieval and Early Modern England," in *The Church and the Book: Papers Read at the 2000 Summer Meeting and the 2001 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. R. N. Swanson, Studies in Church History 38 (Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, N.Y: The Boydell Press, 2004), 123–42; Reinburg, *French Books*. In contrast, Allison Coudert takes a pessimistic stance on female learning in both Catholic and Protestant countries. See "Educating Girls in Early Modern Europe and America," in *Childhood in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: The Results of a Paradigm Shift in the History of Mentality*, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 389–413, 403.

⁶⁴¹ For an extensive literature review, see Robert Black, "Italian Renaissance Education: Changing Perspectives and Continuing Controversies," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 52, no. 2 (1 April 1991): 315–34. The most recent extensive study is Grendler's *Schooling*.

using the same techniques with which one had learned.⁶⁴² Finally, informal learning within the home, especially for girls, was likely guided by mothers or other female caregivers.⁶⁴³

The first step in learning to read was mastering the letters of the alphabet by sight and sound. This was the process used by the Greeks and Romans, which was adopted by Christians for learning in schools and at home and continued, largely unchanged, into the early modern period.⁶⁴⁴ For example, in his advice to a Roman noblewoman on raising her daughter,⁶⁴⁵ Saint Jerome, writing in 403, suggests:

Have a set of letters made for her, of boxwood, or of ivory, and tell her their names. Let her play with them, making play a road to learning, and let her not only grasp the right order of the letters and remember their names in a simple song, but also frequently upset their order and mix the last letters with the middle ones, the middle with the first. Thus she will know them all by sight as well as by sound... Above all take care not to make her lessons distasteful; a childish dislike often lasts longer than childhood.⁶⁴⁶

Although Jerome was writing more than a millennium before the period considered here, his letters were well known in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, having been published in the vernacular in 1497.⁶⁴⁷ As an important source for medieval and early modern moralists,⁶⁴⁸ many of Jerome's recommendations are echoed in later treatises on family and childrearing, especially the importance of pleasure and fun in teaching children to read and write. For example Matteo Palmieri's *Della vita civile* (1428) suggests that cutting fruit and biscuits into letter shapes made learning the alphabet pleasurable for children.⁶⁴⁹ Sixteenth-century schoolteachers also used songs,

⁶⁴² Schutte, 3–16.

⁶⁴³ For a discussion of mothers as teachers in both Catholic and Protestant contexts, see Margaret L. King, "The School of Infancy: The Emergence of Mother as Teacher in Early Modern Times", in *The Renaissance in the Streets, Schools, and Studies: Essays in Honour of Paul F. Grendler*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler and Nicholas Terpstra (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008), 41–85 and Anna Bellavitis, "Education," in *Cultural History of Childhood*, 95–112; 99–103. Also see Gibson, 9–27.

⁶⁴⁴ Grendler, *Schooling*, 142.

⁶⁴⁵ Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 185.

⁶⁴⁶ Jerome, *Select Letters of St. Jerome*, translated by F.A. Wright (London and New York: Harvard University Press, 1933), 344–7, quoted in Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 198.

⁶⁴⁷ Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 185.

⁶⁴⁸ Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 186.

⁶⁴⁹ Matteo Palmieri, *Della vita civile* (Venice, 1534), fol. 10^v, cited in Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Le chiavi fiorentine di Barbablù: L'apprendimento della lettura a Firenze nel XV secolo," *Quaderni storici*, 57, 1984, 770.

chants and competition to help their pupils learn and remember their letters.⁶⁵⁰ Moreover, just as Jerome's letters were inspirational to moralists and pedagogues, they were also of interest to laypeople, including women. For instance, an inventory drawn up in 1533 for the Bolognese woman Sanuda Sanudi notes the presence of two volumes of Saint Jerome's letters among her belongings.⁶⁵¹

It is thus possible to identify ideals about how children should be taught their letters, but more difficult to know if or how these ideals were put into practice, especially in the context of the home. Songs and chants are not preserved, nor are letters made of biscuits and wood. There is some evidence, however, that food could be used as part of the learning process. For instance, a very small English "alphabet bowl" from around 1400 and now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 5.1), was likely used for porridge, soup, or possibly drinking. The cover and bowl are inscribed with a cross and the letters of the alphabet, which were perhaps used to introduce children to the basics of reading.⁶⁵² Notably, the letters on the bowl are in the same script as those found in hornbooks and primers, suggesting a dialogue between these distinct kinds of objects.⁶⁵³

The cost of a silver object like the "alphabet bowl", though, made it beyond the economic reach of most families. Hornbooks, in contrast, were cheap and hugely popular throughout the Italian peninsula.⁶⁵⁴ These objects, called *la tavola*, *la carta* or *la Santa Croce*, usually featured the letters of the alphabet preceded by a cross and followed by a few Latin prayers printed on a single page and attached to a wooden board with a handle.⁶⁵⁵ This enabled a child to hold the board with one hand while using the other to point to or trace the letters,⁶⁵⁶ which were protected by a transparent piece of horn. Despite this layer of defence, there must have been considerable wear on these

⁶⁵⁰ Grendler, *Schooling*, 160; Clanchy, "Learning to Read", 34; Turrini, 430; Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 185.

⁶⁵¹ Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 199.

⁶⁵² Bellavitis, 101.

⁶⁵³ Grendler has noted that there were few differences in primers across Europe. See *Schooling*, 154 and discussed below.

⁶⁵⁴ Stevens's study of late-sixteenth-century Milanese stationers' shops shows they often purchased booklets related to literacy training from printers as they were popular and easy to sell. For example in 1589 Giovanni Antonio Opicini had more than 35,000 sheets of *donati*, *regole*, *interrogatori* and *libretti* - all related to elementary Latin learning (p. 643). For the changes in costs of elementary literacy texts with the advent of printed, rather than manuscript versions, see Richardson, 112-118.

⁶⁵⁵ Grendler notes that the presence of the cross, "a deeply engrained custom", is why these works came to be called *la Santa Croce* (*Schooling*, 143 n. 9).

⁶⁵⁶ Grendler, *Schooling*, 157.

objects; no examples of sixteenth-century Italian hornbooks are known today.⁶⁵⁷ However, Paul Grendler has argued that there was very little difference between literacy teaching tools across Europe, including in Protestant and Catholic countries, between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶⁵⁸ Therefore, examples from elsewhere offer evidence of what Italian hornbooks may have looked like. For instance, figure 5.2 shows a sixteenth-century English hornbook, now in the British Museum, made of black oak with a sheet of thin horn tacked to the front, covering a page printed with the Lord's Prayer. The small size of this object (20 cm long by 9 cm wide) would have made it comfortable for children's hands, and the considerable wear on the handle and back of the hornbook suggest it was well-used.⁶⁵⁹

Extant examples of early modern hornbooks, such as that in the British Museum, closely resemble those pictured in Italian paintings and prints, which helps to confirm that these objects changed very little over time and place. For example, an illumination in a mid-fourteenth-century Venetian manuscript shows the Christ Child with his hornbook suspended from his wrist (fig. 5.3), which is similar to the oak example in London, with a rectangular board and a narrow handle. Both look very much like the panels hanging from the basket of a seller of children's books in Simon Guilain's print after Annibale Carracci's drawing from the 1580s (fig. 5.4). Here again are rectangular boards featuring handles with holes at the end. In the print, the holes enable the hornbooks to hang from the seller's basket, but might also have been used to suspend the panel from a child's wrist, as in the fourteenth-century illumination. Finally, Giuseppe Maria Mitelli's print from 1692 shows male and female students holding rectangular hornbooks by their handles, whilst pointing to the letters with their free hands (fig. 5.5).

Although Mitelli's print was intended for use in a dice game rather than meant as a representation of real life, children did indeed use their fingers to touch the letters, which made necessary the sheet of horn for protection. As we have seen with recommendations by Saint Jerome and Matteo Palmieri, children might be given actual letters of wood, ivory, fruit or biscuits to handle and play with. The silver alphabet

⁶⁵⁷ Niccoli also notes that there are no extant Italian hornbooks from this period ("Bambini in preghiera", 285). Richardson has suggested that hornbooks cost around 1.5 soldi in Florence during the second-half of the fifteenth-century (p. 114; also see Stevens, 643-645).

⁶⁵⁸ Grendler, *Schooling*, 154.

⁶⁵⁹ Annemarieke Willemsen, *Back to the Schoolyard: The Daily Practice of Medieval and Renaissance Education* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 52. The Museum of London also holds a sixteenth-century English hornbook quite similar to, though smaller than that in the British Museum.

bowl, too, would have to have been picked up and turned in order to read all of the letters with which it was inscribed. Thus, learning the letters of the alphabet by sight and sound – whether using a hornbook, ivory letters or an inscribed bowl – also involved touch. Learning one’s letters, therefore, was based upon a variety of sensory experiences.⁶⁶⁰

Once a child had mastered the alphabet, they moved on to learning syllables and then words. This could presumably have been done using combinations of letters of ivory or fruit, but it seems that the first words one learned to read were from common prayers printed in hornbooks or other primers. For example, Giovanni Antonio Tagliente’s *Libro maistrevole* (1524), a treatise to help those who could not attend school learn to read, used traditional teaching methods, beginning with a presentation of the letters of the alphabet and syllables. Rather than including prayers, however, Tagliente presented the pupil with phrases related to business. Anne Jacobson Schutte has argued this was the key reason the treatise was so unpopular, never being reprinted unlike Tagliente’s works on writing and embroidery.⁶⁶¹ Regardless of whether people learned to read at school, home or in the workshop, they seem to have preferred traditional teaching methods and reading materials for beginners, namely, prayers. As Michael Clanchy and Paul Grendler have pointed out, children learned to read not about “the cat on the mat”, but rather from Latin prayers fundamental to the Christian faith, including the Sign of the Cross, Pater Noster, Ave Maria and Apostles’ Creed.⁶⁶²

There are extant examples of texts intended specifically for children that appear to have supported this mode of learning, pairing the letters of the alphabet and syllables with important prayers beyond those included in hornbooks. These works, often called a *saltero*, *salterio*, *psalterio*, *abecedario* or even *Babuino*,⁶⁶³ contained the same elementary information as the hornbook, but with additional prayers, psalms and other

⁶⁶⁰ On the engagement of the senses whilst learning about the Christian faith, see Evangelisti “Learning from Home”, 663–679.

⁶⁶¹ Schutte, 3–16. The unpopularity of this work was perhaps also because business terms and phrases would have been irrelevant for women learning to read.

⁶⁶² Clanchy, “Learning to Read”, 33–39. For the Italian context, see Grendler, *Schooling*, 148; Niccoli, “Bambini in preghiera”, 287.

⁶⁶³ The *Babuino* tended to have less Latin than other primers, with just a few of the most common prayers. The text often included lists of proper and surnames of both men and women as well as the names of nations and cities and other practical information. See Benedict Buono, “I rudimenti per imparare l’italiano nel Cinquecento: il Salterio, il Babuino e l’Interrogatorio della dottrina cristiana,” *Verba: Anuario galego de filoloxia*, no. 35 (2008): 425–37; 429–31.

materials.⁶⁶⁴ Also like hornbooks, these were cheap, popular and endured heavy use by young readers.⁶⁶⁵

The *Psalterio per putti principali* (1575), now in the Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio in Bologna, for example, has perhaps survived because it was not intended for use by a child. As Paul Grendler has noted, the book is printed on vellum, much more costly than paper, and its almost pristine condition suggests it was handled with great care, perhaps as a sort of display model.⁶⁶⁶ As one of a relative few of these kinds of books in existence today, it offers insight into how children learned to read and an example of the texts used in the teaching process. The verso of the title page (fig. 5.6) features a woodcut of the crucifixion, the letters of the alphabet preceded by a cross, similar to the silver bowl in figure 5.1, as well as the words of the Sign of the Cross, the Pater Noster and the Ave Maria. The following pages cover the Apostles' Creed, with woodcuts of the 12 Apostles, prayers for vespers, Confiteor, psalms, hymns in honour of Mary, canticle of Simon, prayers and responses for mass, and the beginning of the gospel of John.⁶⁶⁷ A child using a text like the *Psalterio* would first have learned their letters and syllables and then used this knowledge to begin to read the words of the prayers on the same page.

Memorisation was an important part of this learning process, and not only memorisation of letters and their sounds, but of the words printed on the page. Moralists and pedagogues advised parents to have their children recite and commit to memory the Sign of the Cross, the Ave Maria, the Creed and other important prayers from an early age.⁶⁶⁸ For example a small booklet on the common prayers to be recited in Bolognese homes, published in 1576, advises that every evening families recite together five Pater Nosters and Ave Marias.⁶⁶⁹ The Bolognese *Psalterio* just noted was bound with a booklet that speaks directly to the young reader, advising them on which prayers to say, gestures to make and general comportment while at home and out in the city. For example, upon waking, the child is to recite the Sign of the Cross, Pater Noster, Ave

⁶⁶⁴ Grendler, *Schooling*, 145-6; Richardson, 108.

⁶⁶⁵ Stevens, 639-645.

⁶⁶⁶ Grendler, *Schooling*, 149.

⁶⁶⁷ See Grendler's analysis of this book in, *Schooling*, 149-151.

⁶⁶⁸ Grendler, *Schooling*, 160.

⁶⁶⁹ "Ricordamo ancora, che cosa degna di padre di famiglia christiano seria, che nelle case dove sono persone che sanno leggere, dicessero in luogo delli cinque Paster noster, & cinque Ave Maria", *Istituto*, 2^r.

Maria and the Creed,⁶⁷⁰ and is advised to teach these specific prayers to their younger sisters and brothers.⁶⁷¹

The prayers named in the two instructive booklets are also featured within the first few pages of primers, as in the Bolognese *Psalterio* (fig. 5.6). Thus, through regular exposure to prayers in church and at home, many pupils would have been familiar with some of the words they encountered in hornbooks, the first few pages of the *Psalterio* or other primers. They likely also knew at least some of these prayers by heart.⁶⁷² In *Schools of Christian Doctrine*, for instance, children had to successfully memorise particular prayers before they could move on to learning to read.⁶⁷³ Indeed, the point of “alphabetising the masses” was to ensure that they understood Christian Doctrine and could recite their prayers clearly and correctly.⁶⁷⁴

Just as memorising the words to important prayers would help children learn to read, if only phonetically, images that were commonly included in psalters would also assist with reading. For example, in the Bolognese *Psalterio per putti*, all but the last page feature small woodcut images of various scenes, a few of which repeat throughout the text, such as the Annunciation featured in figure 5.6. The images may have meant to capture young readers’ attention, but likely also acted as mnemonic devices,⁶⁷⁵ particularly as the primer is entirely in Latin. Even if they had committed them to memory, a child would probably not have understood the Latin words they were reading, and the images may have offered context, providing a general idea of which prayer they were reciting.⁶⁷⁶ The woodcut of the Apostles, for example, might help them to recognise that this was the prayer to be recited when they arrived on that page of the book, but also to memorise and recite the Creed by associating each of the twelve Apostles with a specific article.⁶⁷⁷ The pairing of this image and prayer aligns precisely with Antoniano's advice to fathers on how to teach the Creed to their children, discussed in Chapter 4. The employment of text, image and verbal explanation, in Antoniano's

⁶⁷⁰ *Psalterio*, 12^v.

⁶⁷¹ *Psalterio*, 14^v-15^r.

⁶⁷² Reinburg, 108.

⁶⁷³ Turrini, 430.

⁶⁷⁴ Turrini, 429; Richardson, 107.

⁶⁷⁵ On images in books as mnemonic devices see Swanson, 162.

⁶⁷⁶ See Grendler's analysis of this book in *Schooling*, 149-151.

⁶⁷⁷ Grendler, *Schooling*, 147-149. On the use of images in books of hours as mnemonic devices see Reinburg, 125.

mind, would delight the child and help them to commit the words to memory with ease.⁶⁷⁸

Thus, learning to read words and phrases was intertwined with the memorisation of prayers and supported by the images that often appeared in elementary texts. This seems to have been the means by which all Christian children learned to read, regardless of their gender or social class, regardless of whether they learned in school or at home. Once basic reading skills had been developed, however, gender and social class came back into play, and determined how these skills would be put to use.

5.3. Books for Girls and Boys

As was discussed above, the primary purpose of teaching children to read, especially female children, was to support their devotional practice and religious education. Latin prayers were the first words that children read, and if they continued learning and developing literacy skills, it might be through other religious texts.⁶⁷⁹ The “religious and holy books” recommended by moralists could be obtained quite easily and cheaply from shops and as street vendors, like that in figure 5.4.⁶⁸⁰ Many Bolognese homes featured religious books, which may have supported different members of the household, including children, in their devotional practices. For example, the 1564 inventory describing the items found in the home of Alessandro Vinconti after his death includes five *abecedarii*, or alphabet books, perhaps similar to the *Psalterio* discussed above and pictured in figure 5.6. Notably, the inventory also states that Vinconti had five children: Giulio Cesare, Marc’Antonio, Claudio, Smiralda and Samaritana, and perhaps they each had their own text to teach them how to read and pray.⁶⁸¹

Bolognese homes also featured holy books that children might have read once they had advanced beyond the primer. For instance, the inventory drawn up following the death of Alberto Zanolini, a Bolognese notary, in 1569 shows that he owned many

⁶⁷⁸ Antoniano, 54b.

⁶⁷⁹ Grendler, *Schooling*, 278-87.

⁶⁸⁰ “...libri divoti & santi”, Leonardi, 152; Antoniano, 154a. Notably, Antoniano advises fathers to be happy if their daughters know how to say the Office of the Virgin and to read the lives of the saint and some spiritual books. Dolce also recommends that girls read the Old and New Testament, the work of Saints Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome along with Plato, Seneca, Livy, Cicero and other historians. Many of these texts would have been Latin and too difficult for those just beginning to read (*Dialogo*, 20^v-22^v). On Dolce’s reading list see Ajmar, “Women as Exemplars”, 223.

⁶⁸¹ ASB, *Notarile*, Giacomo Simoni, 7/18 (1560-1569), f. 7 no. 178, 2 June 1564 (Inventario Vinconti), 1^r-6^v, 2^v.

books including, “three books of saints, printed and used”, just the type of reading material recommended for children and especially for girls.⁶⁸² Perhaps Zanolini's two unmarried daughters, Smiralda and Pantaselia, were the intended users of these texts.

In addition to primers and books of saints, books of hours were also commonly used to teach basic reading skills and support domestic devotional practices.⁶⁸³ In sixteenth-century Italy, these works were usually called the *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis* or simply the *officiuolo* because of the centrality of the Little Office of Virgin to the text.⁶⁸⁴ Books of hours became important to private devotional practices, especially those of the laity, during the thirteenth-century in response to the development of personal forms of piety. Based on the Divine Office, books of hours were combined prayer books and liturgical works that typically featured a liturgical calendar and prayers to be recited at various hours of the day, though their contents were diverse and unregulated until 1571. Regulation, however, did not diminish the popularity of the text and it could be found in the curriculum for schools as well as personal libraries well into and beyond the sixteenth century.⁶⁸⁵ For example, the home of Count Filippo Manzoli featured, “a little holy book embroidered in gold”, as well as “a large holy book of the Madonna”.⁶⁸⁶ The smaller book may have been similar to an Italian book of hours now in the Beinecke Library, which features its original cloth cover with silver needlework (fig. 5.7). When she married Camillo Chiari in 1582, the noblewoman Artemisia Caprara brought in her trousseau “an Office of Our Lady covered in *morello* figured velvet”. This text was likely quite valuable and perhaps similar to the “Golf Book”, a book of hours now in the British Library, which is covered in purple velvet decorated with silver metalwork with crystals (fig. 5.8).⁶⁸⁷ The Manzoli and Caprara books were probably expensive, perhaps even luxury items given the use of gold and velvet; however, there were also more affordable versions of these texts. Camilla Guidetti, a servant in Bartolomeo Anelli's household, for instance, brought to her husband's home “two little wicker baskets with an Office of Our Lady” when she

⁶⁸² “Tre libri de santi tutti stampati e usi”, Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 5^r-5^v.

⁶⁸³ In her study of French books of hours, Reinburg notes, “the book's use as a primer came second in importance only to its use as a prayer book” (p. 101 but also see pp. 84-128).

⁶⁸⁴ Grendler, “Form and Function”, 467; Harthan, 16.

⁶⁸⁵ Grendler, “Form and Function”, 467; *ibid.*, *Schooling*, 353; and Reinburg, 13.

⁶⁸⁶ The inventory lists: “un libricciolino recamato d'oro” and “Un libricciolo della m^a grande”, Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

⁶⁸⁷ “u^o officio della Madona coperto di veluto morello a opera”, *Archivio Caprara*. Looking at the late-medieval and early modern English context, Walsham has noted that with the shift from manuscript to printed books of hours came the movement of rich decorations from pages to the books' covers (p. 142).

was married in 1598.⁶⁸⁸

Although none of the documents considered here provide detailed descriptions of the texts, Paul Grendler's consideration of fifty-three printed *Officiuoli* suggests they were probably small, thick books with 350-480 pages,⁶⁸⁹ perhaps similar to that in figure 5.7 and those that appear frequently in contemporary portraits of Bolognese girls and women (fig. 3.8 and 5.9). These texts were not, however, restricted to use by female readers.⁶⁹⁰ They were also used in schools, where the student body would have been made up of male pupils and Gabriele Paleotti recommended that while attending Church services on feast days, boys hold in their hands "a book of hours", or some other spiritual text.⁶⁹¹ The users of these books might engage with them in various ways to support prayer, meditation and learning about the Christian faith. They might also find pleasure in seeing images that accompanied text or feeling gold embroidery beneath their fingertips.

There were, however, also books that were intended for entertainment, and that were derided by contemporary moralists. Leonardi, for example, recommends, "children learn to read at Christian Schools rather than through Ariosto and others of similar vanity, latent poisons of the spirit."⁶⁹² Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1516) and other chivalric tales written in the vernacular, often called *libri da bataglia*, or "books of battles", were extremely popular in the sixteenth century.⁶⁹³ Although neither Ariosto's work nor other books of battles appear in the household inventories considered here, these kinds of texts were welcomed in Bolognese orphanages, as the exciting and entertaining stories encouraged boys to read. For the same reasons they engaged male readers, these books were seen as inappropriate for girls and were banned in the city's conservatories.⁶⁹⁴ Instead of chivalric tales, orphaned girls were given catechetical books and if they were from middle-class families were expected to bring devotional works with them when they entered the conservatory.⁶⁹⁵ It is unclear whether or not families divided reading material along the same gendered lines, but, having time and

⁶⁸⁸ "due pannirole piccole con uno offitio d nr^a Madona", ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), 9 January 1598 (Dos D. Camilla) (no pagination).

⁶⁸⁹ Grendler, "Form and Function", 469.

⁶⁹⁰ Grendler, "Form and Function", 468.

⁶⁹¹ *Psalterio*, 14^v.

⁶⁹² Leonardi, xiv.

⁶⁹³ Paul F. Grendler, "What Zuanne Read in School: Vernacular Texts in Sixteenth Century Venetian Schools," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 13, no. 1 (1982): 41-54; 51.

⁶⁹⁴ Terpstra, *Abandoned Children*, 160-161.

⁶⁹⁵ Terpstra, *Abandoned Children*, 72; 151.

the knowledge to read these “latent poisons of the spirit”, as Leonardi described them,⁶⁹⁶ was a luxury not afforded to the poor.

In addition to devotion and pleasure, children may have put their reading skills to use for other kinds of learning or work. Once the basics of literacy had been mastered, boys might move on to study Latin grammar or accounting as they built up knowledge for future roles as notaries, merchants or artisans.⁶⁹⁷ Much of this more advanced learning took place either at school or with a professional tutor; however, Bolognese households did feature books that might have supported boys and young men's studies. For instance, Giovanni Battista and Alessandro Bassari, two minors in the care of their mother and aunt, inherited from their father a number of texts after he died in 1554, including, “a legal text called *l'infortiato*”.⁶⁹⁸ This was likely the *Digestum infortiatum*, the second of three parts of the Emperor Justinian's *Digesta*. Originally a compilation of classical jurists' commentaries completed in 533, Bolognese jurists divided the *Digesta* into three parts in the twelfth century and used it as part of training in civil law throughout the medieval and early modern periods.⁶⁹⁹ It is unclear if the books were intended for the boys to use in their later studies or if their father had practiced law or taught at the University; however, it was not uncommon for boys to follow the same career paths as their fathers and Giovanni Battista and Alessandro likely had access to the legal text as well as the others in the Bassari library. Another example, though, indicates more clearly that children could and did use books in their fathers' libraries. The inventory drawn up following the death of Alberto Zanolini, a Bolognese notary, notes that he left behind four sons, three daughters and a number of books. Zanolini was the owner of, and still in debt for, texts such as: the Statutes of Bologna; a Latin dictionary; the “books of saints” noted above; four merchant's books; four files of notarised documents; and “various writings by various people”.⁷⁰⁰ The male children that were to follow in their father's footsteps may have used these books, and it

⁶⁹⁶ Leonardi, xiv.

⁶⁹⁷ Grendler, *Schooling*, 13-23.

⁶⁹⁸ “Itm Un libro d leg. chiamat l'infortiato grando amezato”, ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1551-1559), 12 June 1554 (d Vinc^a) (no pagination).

⁶⁹⁹ This is likely the *Digestum infortiatum*, the second of three parts (book 24, title 3 to book 38) of the Emperor Justinian's *Digesta*, a compilation of classical jurists' commentaries completed in 533 and divided into three parts by Bolognese jurists in the twelfth-century and taught as part of training in civil law in the medieval and early modern periods. See Rudolf Sohm, *The Institutes of Roman Law*, trans. James Crawford Ledlie, fourth edition (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2002), 12.

⁷⁰⁰ “uno Statuto di Bologna[;] Uno Calepino[;] Tre libri de santi tutti stampati e usi[;] quatro pezzi de libri vecchii da merca/ti qua'do il loro pr/e faceva l'arte di lana quasi tutti scritti[;] Quatro filze de varii instrumenti rogati per il detto lor padre[;] varie Scritture di varie persone et libri et lettere et spetati al gia detto lor padre mentre era nos^r mercante”, Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 5^r-5^v.

appears that Zanolini's son, Camillo, later also became a notary.⁷⁰¹ In light of modern scholars' suggestions that women had very low levels of literacy and contemporary writers' dismissal of the need to educate girls in Latin, most of the texts in Zanolini's library would have been inappropriate for and incomprehensible to his daughters. The Statutes of Bologna, or *Statuta Civilia Civitatis Bononiae*, for instance, was first published in 1530 in Latin, as were the glosses published in 1532 and 1566.⁷⁰² There is a later entry in the document, however, that suggests two of Zanolini's daughters, Smiralda and Pantaselia, were familiar with the Statutes of Bologna. Within a list of the heirs' debts, the document states:

Smiralda and Pantasilea, sisters of Camillo and Bartolomeo and daughters of Signore Alberto, claim to have owed to each of them, as part of their inheritance, dowries as much as was given to Madonna Orsina, their sister, which was 2,400 [lire] in cash and 800 [lire] in trousseau goods, and this they say to be clear in the laws and statutes of Bologna.⁷⁰³

Although the language used in the entry casts doubt on the sisters' claim, Smiralda and Pantaselia were not incorrect. Because Alberto Zanolini died intestate, his daughters were in fact entitled to dowries as their inheritance, though nothing more.⁷⁰⁴ If their father had left a will, Smiralda and Pantaselia, and daughters in general, were supposed to be content with whatever provisions left to them, if any, and could not claim anything further.⁷⁰⁵ Perhaps in this instance what was in dispute was not the notion of providing dowries to the sisters, as it would have put them and the family's honour at risk to have them remain outside of either terrestrial or sacred marriages, but the amount they

⁷⁰¹ These documents could pertain to Alberto's father, also called Camillo. ASB, *Notarile*, Mandati di procura (1502 - 1581).

⁷⁰² These were published as *Statuta Civilia Civitatis Bononiae multis glossis variis Provisionibus ac amplissimo indice novissime formata* (Bologna, 1532) and *Statuta Civilia Civitatis Bononiae, Cum Adnotationibus Gozzadini* (Venice, 1566). Shona Kelly Wray, *Communities and Crisis: Bologna During the Black Death* (Leiden: BRILL, 2009), 240-241; Thomas Kuehn, "Some Ambiguities of Female Inheritance Ideology in the Renaissance", *Continuity and Change* 2, no. 01 (May 1987): 11-36.

⁷⁰³ "Item m^a Smiralda e Pantasilea sorelle deli detti Sr Camillo e Bart^o figliole del detto gia Sr Alberto si pretendeno haver à [illegible] dotate in detta heredita di tanto qua'to è stata la sopta m^a Ursina lor sorella per ciascheduna seriano lire doe milla e quantocento de denar è ottocento lire de apparati et di questo dicono essere chiare nele legi e statui di Bolog^a". ASB Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 6^r.

⁷⁰⁴ For example see Julius Kirshner, *Marriage, Dowry, and Citizenship in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (University of Toronto Press, 2015); Isabelle Chabot, *La dette des familles: femmes, lignage et patrimoine à Florence aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2011); Thomas Kuehn, *Law, Family & Women: Toward a Legal Anthropology of Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Dean and Lowe; Klapisch-Zuber, "Griselda", 213-46.

⁷⁰⁵ Wray, 11-12.

requested.⁷⁰⁶ The 3,200 lire that made up Orsina's dowry and trousseau was a considerable sum for one daughter, let alone three. In fact, the family had to borrow from a relative in order to pay for Orsina's dowry, to whom they were still in debt 1,200 lire when Alberto Zanolini died.⁷⁰⁷

Thus it appears that the Zanolini sisters tried to use their education and the objects found in their environment to shape their own futures. Distrust of female agency was perhaps why moralists and treatise writers urged that young women's literacy be kept to a minimum. As the conservative Silvio Antoniano advised, a father, "should be content with his daughter knowing how to recite the Office of the Virgin and reading the lives of the saints and spiritual books", and she should use the rest of her time to attend to household chores.⁷⁰⁸ Indeed, the level of learning that the Zanolini sisters seem to have achieved was uncommon, and most girls, especially those from the lower social orders, were fortunate if they learned the basics of reading.

The inability to read fluently, though, does not mean that girls, and indeed all children, did not engage with books in meaningful ways. For example, they may have used pictures within religious texts or picked up on familiar words to help them their prayers. Or, as Gabriele Paleotti instructed, on feast days a child should visit their local church holding in their hand, "the Office of the Virgin, Christian Doctrine or some other spiritual book", which could stand in the place of a rosary, presumably to provide the believer a physical connection to the divine.⁷⁰⁹ Books could also be passed down from one generation to the next, offering a connection to and reminder of lineage and lost family members. In some cases, it might fall to children, particularly sons, to continue or add to family documents, such as household account books or diaries, which would require writing skills, discussed in the next section.

5.4. Learning to Write

As with reading, the degree to which a person could write was also determined, in large part, by their gender and class in sixteenth-century Italy. As discussed above, Antoniano suggested all boys should learn to read and write in the vernacular, and that girls'

⁷⁰⁶ As Carboni has found, at the beginning of the sixteenth century the average dowry for a bride from an elite family was around 2,000 lire and this sky-rocketed to 12,000 lire by 1600 ("Economics", 375).

⁷⁰⁷ Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 6^r.

⁷⁰⁸ Antoniano, 154a.

⁷⁰⁹ "In Chiesa procurarete d'havere in man la Corona, ò il Roasio, ò l'Officiolo della Madonna, ò la Dottrina Christiana, ò qualche altro libro spirituale", *Psalterio*, 14^v.

writing abilities should coincide with their social class. Noble girls should write well and those of the middling-sort should be able write a little. Girls from humble families did not require this skill at all, as writing did not play a role in reciting prayers or educating the next generation of Christians, which were the primary motives for teaching them to read.⁷¹⁰ For this reason, too, Schools of Christian Doctrine tended to spend less time teaching pupils to write than on the catechism and reading skills.⁷¹¹

In other schools, attended largely by male pupils, writing was taught in a step-by-step process, similar to reading. The teacher would first guide a child's hand to help them learn the physical motion of writing. Once the pupil could use a pen without assistance, they copied the letters of the alphabet followed by syllables, words and then longer texts after models offered by the teacher, either hand-written or from printed books.⁷¹² Although it is from fourteenth-century Tuscany, an elementary Latin grammar book now in the Beinecke Library gives some indication of how a child learned to write. Figure 5.10 shows the letters of the alphabet written out numerous times and within the same book a parent or a teacher wrote: "I love to study my lessons, etc.," for a pupil to copy.⁷¹³ As Katherine Hoyle has noted, one of the book's users, Antonio, wrote his name at least twenty-five times throughout the pages and used blank spaces to practice writing out the alphabet and to draw pictures of knights, dragons and monks (figs. 5.10-5.11), suggesting his excitement of owning a book and learning to write.⁷¹⁴

The language and type of script in which children learned to write was determined by the type of school they attended; those in Latin schools learned humanist scripts such as chancery formal and chancery cursive and those studying *abbaco* learned merchant cursive.⁷¹⁵ In both kinds of schools the students also learned to prepare a quill for writing, to choose the right type of paper and to get the ink to the right consistency. These skills were also covered in the many texts that taught writing, which circulated from the beginning of the sixteenth century. It was likely through a combination of formal training with a teacher, assisted learning with a relative or co-worker and self-

⁷¹⁰ Antoniano, 153b. Also see Grendler, *Schooling*, 89.

⁷¹¹ Turrini, 431.

⁷¹² Grendler, *Schooling*, 327-8.

⁷¹³ "a me delecta studiari i meo lec[i]one], etc.", quoted in Katherine Hoyle, "A Child's Book and Its Readers In Renaissance Italy: The Annotations in a Latin Primer (MS 750)," *The Yale University Library Gazette* 67, no. 1/2 (October 1, 1992): 21-26; 22.

⁷¹⁴ Hoyle, 21-26.

⁷¹⁵ Grendler, *Schooling*, 323-5.

teaching, using didactic manuals or copying from the books a pupil had access to, that some people learned to write, often in a crude or irregular script.⁷¹⁶

It was less common for girls to learn how to write than to read, but if they did so, the same teaching methods employed in schools were likely used at home. For instance, in addition to offering advice on teaching girls to read, Saint Jerome also had suggestions for helping them learn to write, which appears similar to what went on in schools:

When she begins with uncertain hand to use the pen, either let another hand be put over hers to guide her baby fingers, or else have the letters marked on the tablet so that her writing may follow their outlines and keep to their limits without straying away.⁷¹⁷

It may not have been necessary for most girls to be able to write well, but there were instances where they might need to draw on basic skills with a pen. For example, like other young women, when Ludovica and Maria Maddalena Caccialupi entered the convent of Santa Caterina in Bologna's Strada Maggiore, they had to sign their professions of faith with a cross. The two documents, preserved in the Archivio di Stato in Bologna,⁷¹⁸ suggest the sisters had different skill levels with a pen. Figure 5.12 shows the cross signed by Ludovica, which appears quickly done and less careful than that by her sister, Maria Maddalena, pictured in figure 5.13. Nevertheless, both girls had clearly handled a pen and perhaps even practiced drawing crosses before this event; to be unsure or unsteady with a pen at this important moment in their lives might have reflected badly on the Caccialupi family. These girls, though, were from a patrician household in which there would have been more resources to devote to teaching them to write, even if at a very basic level. For girls from humble backgrounds it was even more unlikely that they would learn to write than to read, as it was unnecessary for their future roles.

Writing might also be unnecessary or unimportant in boys' future roles, though they were more likely to learn this skill than their sisters. While this kind of learning may have taken place outside of the home, Bolognese households had many objects for learning and practicing writing skills. In 1574 the home of Bartolomeo Rota, a Bolognese notary, featured an inkstand of leather, a walnut stool for writing and,

⁷¹⁶ Grendler, *Schooling*, 327-9.

⁷¹⁷ See note 646 above.

⁷¹⁸ *Demaniale*, Santa Caterina.

appropriately, a notary's stool.⁷¹⁹ Count Filippo Manzoli also had tools for writing account and "memory" books, including seals, stamps and a cypress wood inkstand, as noted in the inventory compiled after his death in 1560.⁷²⁰ The inventory of the shop belonging to Gabriele Iacomini lists some of the various writing tools available for purchase in mid-sixteenth-century Bologna, such as two quills and inkstands, valued at 3 denari, eight bone inkstands, worth 8 denari and eight more inkstands also in bone, valued at 1 lire 3 denari.⁷²¹ The shop also contained 11 books "da scrivere",⁷²² perhaps similar to treatises by Sigismondo Fanti (1514), Giovanni Antonio Tagliente (1547) and Giovanni Francesco Cresci (1560), which aimed to teach those who could not attend formal schools how to write.⁷²³ Alternatively, these may have been blank books for buyers to write in themselves.

Although none of the listings of desks, inkstands or even writing books are explicitly associated with children in the inventories, there is evidence that young people practiced, if not learned writing in the domestic context. For instance, books similar to those listed in Gabriele Iacomini's shop are included in the inventory describing the inheritance of Giovanni Battista and Alessandro Bassari, discussed above. Along with the books in vulgate and Latin, the boys inherited three different books "da scrivere".⁷²⁴ Although this may indicate that the books are manuscripts rather than printed, it is more likely they were treatises on writing or perhaps even books to be written in.⁷²⁵ Finally, the inventory drawn up after the death of the notary Alberto

⁷¹⁹ "un calamaro di corame... una scrana d noce da far le suoi scrivici... un scabello da notar". While the inkstand and stool were found in the generically titled "camera", the notary's stool is described as being found in the courtyard. Notaio Rota (Rota), 47^r.

⁷²⁰ "Un credenzone grande pieno di scritti... sigillato con un tapedo vecchio suso con il si gillo del maciero... Certi libri da conti o memoriali che sono servati in detto studiolo bullato col ditto bollo... Un calamar da scriver d'ancipresso". The seals and account books were likely kept in Filippo's *studiolo* while the inkstand was, interestingly, in the *sala* alongside a spear case, paintings, a harpsichord and several desks. Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

⁷²¹ "2 penarole e calamare L0-3[;] 8 calamature d osse L0-8[;] 8 calamri d osse L1-3", ASB, *Notarile*, Francesco Nobili, 6/1 (1558-1560), f. 45, 3 December 1558 (Gabriele di Bartolomeo Iacomini) (no pagination).

⁷²² "2 libri da scrivere grandio de carta L1-0... 9 libicioli d carta piccoli da scrivere L1-1". As Iacomini also sold pages that presumably taught *abbaco* ("1/2 carto da abac^o L0-13... 5 cartoni da bacho L0-15"), it seems likely that these were didactic texts (Notaio Nobili (Iacomini)).

⁷²³ See Emanuele Casamassima, *Trattati di scrittura del Cinquecento italiano* (Milan: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1966) and Arthur Sidney Osley, *Luminario: An Introduction to the Italian Writing-Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Nieuwkoop: Miland 1972). Also see Grendler, *Schooling*, 325-27 and Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 119.

⁷²⁴ "Un altro libro da scriver... dui libro da scrivere", Notaio Sigurani (Vinc^a).

⁷²⁵ "Itm sete libri vulgari di piu sorte[;] Itm Un altro libro da scriver[;] Itm Un libro d leg. chiamat l'infornato grandio amezato[;] Itm un altro libro di lege grado uso[;] Itm un altro libro chiamato p[er]sio[;] Itm un libro d le questione d[e]l beroaldo[;] Itm dui libro da scrivere[;] Itm una sachetta co assai scritture di piu sorta di carta bambasina et cavreza". Notaio Sigurani (Vinc^a).

Zanolini in 1569, offers an example of writing by two young people. Figure 5.14 shows Alberto's sons Camillo, age 20, and Bartolomeo, age 15, gave their confirmation that the inventory of goods as well as the lists of credits and debits was complete and accurate to their knowledge.⁷²⁶ Although they probably learned to write at school, the boys clearly had opportunities to practice and use their skills around familial events and within domestic space.

Depending on a family's social class, a household could have many objects related to writing and learning to write, which could be used to teach children or help them practice. A child's gender, though, was a key factor that determined if they needed to learn these skills. Girls were less likely to learn to write than their brothers and sons of notaries were more likely to learn Latin than those of a stonemason, for instance.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that people had many complex interactions with the texts they encountered, even from a very young age. Children pointed to and traced with their fingers the letters in their hornbooks. Later they copied letters, words and longer texts from books, and sometimes even into books as in figure 5.10, as they learned to write and, at times, as a means of committing those words to memory. A child might read a book aloud to others, as the boys at Bologna's *Accademia degli Ardenti* were required to do during mealtimes,⁷²⁷ or might listen as a family member read from a prayer book. Reading to oneself, whether silent or aloud, might assist with meditation or the recitation of a prayer. The images within a text could also support devotional practice, whether intellectually as with meditation or physically with kisses and caresses.⁷²⁸ An image might be held in or "imprinted" on the mind, acting as an aid to reading comprehension, to signal actions to be performed, or to assist with the memorisation of a text. A young person could draw or otherwise add their own images to a book, or use images to create something external such as a drawing, painting or piece of embroidery. These varied and complex interactions began early, developed over the course of a lifetime and were entangled with gender and social class. These factors determined if and to what extent a person might be educated, but also how they put reading and

⁷²⁶ Notaio Simoni (Zanolini), 7^r.

⁷²⁷ *Capitoli*, 12.

⁷²⁸ Reinburg, 112-116.

writing skills to use. In turn, practicing these skills often helped to emphasise the differences between men and women and the rich and the poor.

Chapter 6: The Sword and the Needle: Children and Domestic Education

This chapter examines some of the skills and knowledge that upper class children might learn at home beyond religion, reading and writing. As discussed in Chapter 5, children's literacy was largely determined by gender and social class, and this held true for other skills as well. Boys and girls would go on to play different roles in the family and society later in life, and so needed to develop different skill sets. Because there were a greater number of options for the paths that boys could follow, there was more variety in what they might learn and more opportunities for learning outside of the home. In contrast, there were two paths that girls generally followed: one toward marriage and the other toward the convent. The skills that they needed to fulfil their destinies, whether as wives and mothers or nuns, were often learned at home.

The first section of this chapter looks at the role of arms and armour as practical objects needed for participation in battle, tournaments and civic processions but also their more symbolic role within the home, once these events had ended. Because wearing a sword, fighting in a joust and elevated roles in the governance of the city were the preserve of the elite, this section looks at the relationship between arms and armour and males from patrician families; however, as we will see, arms and armour could have quite different meanings and purposes for various members of the same family.

Girls from different social classes needed to develop different skills, and their homes often featured objects to support this kind of learning, which is the focus of the second section of this chapter. Pots and pans, spindles and looms and needles and thread were all practical tools for attending to domestic tasks and for teaching girls how to cook, produce fabric or sew, but they were also symbolic, especially when included in brides' trousseaux. They could represent knowledge and ability, feminine virtue and industriousness but would also signal the social class to which a bride belonged and the wealth of her family. Thus, social class determined what one learned, and the practice or employment of skills could emphasise and reinforce one's position within the social hierarchy.

6.1. Arms, Armour and Learning in the Home

Men needed training to correctly, effectively and gracefully use arms and armour and there were a number of ways in which these skills could be developed during the early

modern period. Beginning as young as seven, noble boys could go to court for training as a page, where they would learn proper comportment, along with fencing, horsemanship and other skills.⁷²⁹ As a city without a court, Bolognese parents had to send their sons away if this was the path to be followed. Count Filippo Manzoli, for instance, was sent to Rome to serve at the court of Pope Paul III as a youth,⁷³⁰ where he may have practiced if not learned a variety of skills with weapons and armour. Young men could also stay in Bologna to learn to fight and bear arms; from at least the quattrocento, the city was a centre for training in fencing and swordsmanship. In the fifteenth century young men could train with Lippo Bartolomeo Dardi or, later, his pupil Guido Antonio di Luca. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Achille Marozzo ran a *sala d'arme* in the city and published a treatise on swordsmanship with numerous editions printed between 1536 and 1615.⁷³¹ Other masters working in Bologna also published treatises on fencing and swordplay, for instance the anonymous manuscript *L'Arte della Spada* (c. 1500-50), Giovanni dall'Agocchie's *Dell'arte di scrimia* (Venice, 1572) and Angelo Viggiani's *Tratto dello schermo* (Bologna, 1588).⁷³² There is little modern scholarship on these schools and their students, though as Dardi remarked in a letter to the Bolognese government in 1443, learning to handle a sword and other weapons, was, "beneficial to the youths of this city and the honour of this state".⁷³³

Regardless of how or where they had learned to use weapons and comport themselves in armour, once they had achieved some level of skill, boys and young men from noble families could participate in special events held in Bologna throughout the year, such as the festivities that surrounded weddings, processions and tournaments. For example, a chronicle describing Piriteo Malvezzi and Beatrice Orsini's wedding in 1584 describes pages and footmen wearing:

little boots of silver, doublets of flesh-coloured satin made in the Moorish-style with buttons and trimmings of silver, with sleeves of silver gauze, with gilded swords at their sides; on their heads they wore berets of flesh-

⁷²⁹ J.H. Hexter, "The Education of the Aristocracy in the Renaissance", *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 22, no. 1 (1950): 1-20; 2-3.

⁷³⁰ Crescenzi, 527.

⁷³¹ Egerton Castle, *Schools and Masters of Fence, from the Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century* (York: G. Bell and Sons, 1888), 33, 96, 105.

⁷³² Castle, 66.

⁷³³ "...per utilita deli zuveni de questa cita, e onore de questo stato", *Archivio di Stato, Bologna, Comune, Governo, busta 318, Riformagioni e provvigioni, Serie miscellanea, busta 5* transcribed by Trevor Dean <https://medievalcrimehistory.wordpress.com/2015/06/>

coloured satin in the Moorish-style with plumes at the top and bands of green satin around, trimmed with silver.⁷³⁴

Descriptions of older and presumably more experienced men also note on the skill with which they controlled their bodies, decked with rich textiles and armour. For instance, the same chronicle describes three knights dressed in, “gleaming armour with the grandest crests with pure white feathers... On their shoulders they had pikes of oak trimmed with silver fringes.” The anonymous author goes on to explain how, “one could not discern the difference” between Antonio Malchiavelli, Camillo Chiari and Girolamo Ratta, because they were dressed identically but also because of their bodily comportment.⁷³⁵

These examples come from descriptions of parades and theatrical displays, but young men also participated in tournaments and jousts, demonstrating their strength and military prowess. For instance at the age of nineteen, Ranuccio Manzoli was one of several young noblemen that participated in “a lovely tournament in the Piazza delle Scuole” in 1578.⁷³⁶ One chronicle describes Ranuccio as having worn, “white armour, and an overdress of crimson velvet fringed with silver, with the most beautiful crest of white feathers”, and having been armed, “with a pike, mace and fighting rapier”.⁷³⁷ Tournaments and jousts were competitive and dangerous, requiring knowledge and skill in horsemanship, the use of various weapons and experience wearing and riding in armour that was much heavier than that worn for parades and processions.⁷³⁸ Additionally, these events drew large crowds and were recorded in chronicles for posterity; therefore, a young man needed to have learned and practiced a variety of skills beforehand, not only for his own safety, but so as to bring honour to himself and his family.

⁷³⁴ “I Paggi, & sei Staffieri havevano stivaletti d’argento, giuppe di raso incarnato fatte alla moresca con bottoni, & guarnimenti d’argento, con le maniche di tocca d’oro, con le storte dorate à lato: in capo portavano berettini di raso incarnato alla moresca con pennacchi in cima, & fascie di raso verde intorno guarnite d’argento.” *Descrittione della festa fatta in Bologna...* (Bologna, 1586), 15^v.

⁷³⁵ “Havevano guarniti i loro vestiri di bottoni d’oro, & i capelli di veluto bianco fasciati di gioie, e perle, & di candidissime piume ornati, & che fu gran meraviglia tutti tre non solo ne gli abiti, ma nelle dispositioni del corpo tanto conformi, che non vi si discerneva differenza alcuna, questi erano il Signore Antonio Malchiavelli, il Sig. Camillo Chiari, & Sig. Girolamo Ratta”, *Descrittione*, 27^r. On male dress for special events in Florence, see Currie, *Fashion*, 17-35.

⁷³⁶ Dolfi, 518 and *Descrittione*, 10^r and 17^r. Ranuccio was the son of Alessandro Manzoli (1535-1570) and Vittoria Malvezzi. Alessandro was many years older than his brothers as he was born to Filippo and his first wife, Gioanna Ariosti. Crescenzi, 527.

⁷³⁷ Salvatore Muzzi, *Annali della città di Bologna: dalla sua origine al 1796*, vol. 6 (Bologna, 1843), 594.

⁷³⁸ Helmut Nickel, “Arms & Armour from the Permanent Collection,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, Summer 1991, 1-61; 20.

If a young man performed well, participation in civic events could lead to great rewards. Orazio Verardino, for example, was knighted at age 17 after serving as a page to Pope Clement VIII when he visited Bologna in 1598. This would have been a proud moment for his family, which was part of the city's minor nobility, and seems to have been the reason behind the commission of a portrait of the young knight, now lost but reproduced in print (fig. 6.1).⁷³⁹ The young man's fine clothing, sword and coat of arms signal that he and his family are of high social status, and the inclusion of the three chains around his neck signal that he is a knight. Finally, because, as we know from the inscription on the print, Orazio died only a few years later, the image would have gone on to commemorate him and the loss of such talent at a young age.⁷⁴⁰ Presumably his portrait was kept at the Verardino home and perhaps offered a figure for emulation by Orazio's siblings or boys and young men of the next generation, signalling achievements they too could strive for.

Although one can only speculate about how Orazio's portrait and armour were displayed and the effect they may have had on residents and visitors to the Verardino home, the patrician Caccialupi family provides more substantial evidence about how these kinds of objects were meaningful within the domestic context. The household inventory drawn up after the death of the patriarch and knight, Ludovico Caccialupi, in 1588, shows that the family was in possession of a great deal of arms and armour. Some of the items listed in the inventory, such as swords and gilded trappings for horses, were worn and displayed by noblemen as a sign of their social status and privilege.⁷⁴¹ Other items were related to Ludovico and his ancestors' specific roles and activity in civic life. For instance, the halberd described as "for the *colleggi*",⁷⁴² would have been related to the roles that Caccialupi men played as Gonfalonieri del Popolo over many decades.⁷⁴³ The family was also in possession of weapons and armour for battle and warfare, including daggers, a sabre, a cloak and a pair of gloves.⁷⁴⁴ Finally, the round shield and breastplate with a lance rest described in the inventory were typical of arms and armour

⁷³⁹ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 182. Dolfi notes his being made a knight, 693.

⁷⁴⁰ Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana*, 182.

⁷⁴¹ The inventory includes an entire section titled: "per cavalli et cavalcasse" (358^r-358^v) and, for instance, "sei spade di piu sorte vecchie" under the list of arms and armour (Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r-355^v). On coaches and carriages and the nobility, see Cavallo and Storey, 168-9 and Muzzarelli, "Bologna", 225.

⁷⁴² "Una labarda da colleggi", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r.

⁷⁴³ Rossi, 52 and 68.

⁷⁴⁴ "Due pugnali grandi da campagna", "Una storta da campagna", "Un par di guanti da campagna[...] Una cappa di sacco da compagnia", Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r & 358^v.

worn in tournaments and described in contemporary chronicles and festival books.⁷⁴⁵ The family was thus in possession of an array of arms and armour that demonstrated and celebrated participation in civic roles and events over several generations, which was a key component in the construction of patrician masculine identities in this period.

Although some of the Caccialupi family's weapons and armour were kept in chests and *credenze*, and therefore out of sight,⁷⁴⁶ other objects seem to have been on display in accessible parts of the home. For instance, the inventory includes “a walnut rack for arms, furnished with 21 pikes”,⁷⁴⁷ “a small round shield”⁷⁴⁸ and “ten spears among the *sala* and the chambers downstairs”.⁷⁴⁹ This kind of display does not seem to have been particular to the Caccialupi home, as similar descriptions are found of weapons, and particularly pole-arms and shields, in other Bolognese households. For example, in 1560 the *sala* of the palazzo belonging to Count Filippo Manzoli contained “a rack for shafted weapons with 21 pikes” as well as “four bucklers”, or round shields.⁷⁵⁰ In 1574 the Bolognese nobleman, Lanfranco Marescotti, had “two softwood racks for holding shafted weapons”, though likely in his study rather than the *sala* of his home.⁷⁵¹ The objects within these cases and the term used to describe them, *rastelli*, suggests they may have been similar to those found in *porteghi* of Venetian homes. In Venice, these displays were called *restelliere* and consisted of spears arranged in a fan-shape behind a shield, alongside other arms, armour, portraits and banners, the whole collection called a *lanziera di arme* (fig. 6.2).⁷⁵² It is unclear if Bolognese racks for pole-arms and shields were part of larger displays like *lanziere di arme*; however, the Caccialupi family was in possession of several portraits of male family members (two of whom were knights),⁷⁵³ ceremonial and “Turkish-style” arms,⁷⁵⁴ as well as many

⁷⁴⁵ “Un petto con la resta” and “Una rotella o, scudo”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r.

⁷⁴⁶ For instance “Cinque casse da schioppo”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r.

⁷⁴⁷ “Un rastello d'arme di noce fornito di Picche, da basso, n° ventuno”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 353^r.

⁷⁴⁸ “Una rotella o, scudo”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r.

⁷⁴⁹ “Dieci speti fra sala et camere di basso”, Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r.

⁷⁵⁰ “Un rastello di arme d'asta con 21 picche” and “Quattro rodelle”, Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

⁷⁵¹ “dui rastelli da tener suso delle armo d'asta d legno dolce”; these are listed in a room halfway up the stairs alongside a bed, an icon of the Madonna, writing desk and a bench, suggesting a study. Notaio Sigurani (Marescotti), 38^r.

⁷⁵² Fortini Brown, *Private Lives*, 19-20; *ibid.*, “Venetian *casa*”, 57 and Contadini, 320.

⁷⁵³ Portraits of male family members included two of Signore Floriano “il vecchio”, one of the Knight, Floriano and one “only sketched and unframed” of Ludovico (“due ritratti del sig^r floriano vecchio, uno corniciato di legno, l'altro co le corici dorate[;] il Ritratto del sign^r cav^{re} floriano corniciato di noce[;] il ritratto del sig^{re} Cavalier lud^{co} solo abbozzato et scorniciato”). Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 353^v.

⁷⁵⁴ Including the halberd mentioned above and “a bow in the Turkish-style” (“Un arca alla turchesca”). Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^r.

pieces of armour in 1588.⁷⁵⁵ These objects and images would have announced and celebrated the contributions the Caccialupi family had made, and would continue to make, to civic life.⁷⁵⁶

Maria DePrano has suggested that Florentine young men may have stood alongside or referred to arms, armour and portraits as they regaled listeners with tales of their participation in jousts, tournaments and processions,⁷⁵⁷ and this kind of activity may have occurred in Bolognese homes as well. The telling of these stories would remind listeners of the honour and prestige of individuals and their lineage, but was perhaps also a way of keeping the memory of absent male family members alive. This would have been particularly important in the case of fatherless boys and young men, such as those in the Caccialupi family. When Ludovico died in 1588 his sons, Carl'Antonio, Giovanni and Cesare were 20, 13 and 8 years old respectively. Although the eldest son, Carl'Antonio, may have told stories of his own experiences in civic events and tournaments in relation to the arms and armour in his home, he may also have recounted tales of other male relatives' feats and the honour they had brought the family for the benefit of his younger brothers or visitors to the family's home in Via Galliera (fig. 1.5). The "halberd of the *collegio*" may have served as a prop for explaining Ludovico's role as a Gonfaloniero del Popolo in 1566, 1569 and 1585.⁷⁵⁸ Perhaps the "only sketched and unframed" portrait of the recently deceased patriarch was employed in this explanation as well, especially in the years following his death as a means of keeping his memory alive.⁷⁵⁹ Referring to the display of pole arms in the *sala* and perhaps before the portrait of his ancestor also listed in the household inventory, Carl'Antonio may have explained to his younger brothers, relatives or visitors to the home how his forbearer, Floriano Caccialupi had acted as a page during Charles V's coronation in Bologna and was one of the young men knighted by the Emperor for his service.⁷⁶⁰ Carl'Antonio might also have explained how a more distant relative, Floriano *il vecchio*, whose portrait was also displayed in the Caccialupi home, had

⁷⁵⁵ For instance, "two 'legs', two 'knees', a pair of sleeves, a brestplate with a lance-rest, a little cuirass" ("due Gambe[:]; due Ginocchii[:]; un par di maniche[:]; un petto con la resta[:]; una corazzina"), Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 355^f.

⁷⁵⁶ Fortini Brown, "Venetian *casa*", 57.

⁷⁵⁷ Maria DePrano, "Chi vuol esser lieto, sia: Objects of Entertainment in the Tornabuoni Palace in Florence," in *Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior*, 127–42; 130–131.

⁷⁵⁸ Rossi, 52 & 68.

⁷⁵⁹ See note 753 above or Appendix 2 for the listing of this portrait in the 1588 inventory.

⁷⁶⁰ Muzzi, vol. 6, 594.

served as a carver during the wedding festivities when Annibale II Bentivoglio was married to Lucrezia d'Este a century earlier.⁷⁶¹

Arms and armour, as well as the stories told about these objects and their users, thus served to announce the Caccialupi family's long service to Bologna and the honour this bestowed on the lineage, as well as to celebrate the achievements of individual family members. These were important objects that were part of a lineage's *masserizie*, or "core possessions", that should not leave the family.⁷⁶² Indeed, as with the family name and property, arms and armour, as well as the stories about them and the physical prowess they referred to, were often passed down to from one generation to the next. This, Carolyn Springer has argued, suggests, "a regime of masculinity defined by heredity... evoking a past and future beyond the individual."⁷⁶³ For boys and young men in the Caccialupi home, arms and armour, as a system of objects, presented aspects of both their past and future. Carl'Antonio's future was expected to include his participation in the governance of the city, the assumption of roles in civic celebrations and ceremonies, marriage and the generation of male offspring to inherit the Caccialupi patrimony and carry on the family name. He was to follow in the footsteps, if not wear the armour and use the weapons, of his father and other male relatives whose achievements were marked within the home.⁷⁶⁴

Giovanni, Ludovico Caccialupi's second son, was to have a future quite different from that of his father and elder brother, though arms and armour would have played important roles in life as well. By 1588 the thirteen year-old had already been made a Knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, or a Knight of Malta as we know the Order today.⁷⁶⁵ By the late-sixteenth century this was a prestigious, pan-European religious order, and Giovanni's acceptance into it would have both demonstrated and bolstered his family's honour; applicants had to meet strict genealogical, religious and financial criteria, and minors, as Giovanni was when he was apparently knighted at age

⁷⁶¹ Muzzi, vol. 5, 117. On portraits and family memory in Florence, see Patricia Lee Rubin, "Art and the Imagery of Memory," in *Art, Memory, and Family*, 67–85.

⁷⁶² Dora Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 24.

⁷⁶³ Carolyn Springer, *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 163.

⁷⁶⁴ See, for instance, Chojnacki, "Subaltern Patriarchs"; Cavallo, "Bachelorhood", 376–77; Springer, 160–161. On "house-hold based masculinity", see Emanuel Buttigieg, "Chastity, Bachelorhood and Masculinity in Early Modern Europe: The Case of the Hospitaller Knights of St John (c.1520–c.1650)," in *Paths to Gender: European Historical Perspectives on Women and Men*, ed. Carla Salvaterra and Berteke Waaldijk (Pisa: Edizioni Plus, Pisa University Press, 2009), 209–24; 214.

⁷⁶⁵ He is described as a knight in the inventory of 1588 ("Dni Iohannis equitis anno tredecim"). Notaio Passarotti (Caccialupi), 347^r

5,⁷⁶⁶ could only be accepted upon presentation of a dispensation from the Holy See and payment of an increased entrance fee.⁷⁶⁷

Although the details of Giovanni's childhood are unknown, he may have spent time as a page at the court of the Grand Master in Malta and he would have had to complete at least four six-month terms at sea on the Order's galleys.⁷⁶⁸ This was the minimum required for those who aimed to gain office within the Order,⁷⁶⁹ which Giovanni eventually did. He went on to become the governor of the Order's Fort San'Angelo as well as its fortification in Senglea, both on the Isle of Malta.⁷⁷⁰ As such, much of Giovanni's adult life, if not his childhood, would have been spent away from his family and native city. However, if we consider Springer's idea of "inherited prowess" and the importance of one's lineage in gaining membership to this order in particular, it seems that household and family continued to be important elements of identity for at least some Knights of Malta, and Giovanni Caccialupi in particular.

Giovanni's continued involvement in Caccialupi family and domestic life, despite his absence from Bologna, is indicated in a document drawn up in 1617, nearly thirty years after his father's death. During this period, Giovanni had presumably spent much of his life away from his family, yet it seems that his presence remained in the Caccialupi household in Bologna. An inventory drawn up following Carl'Antonio's death in 1617, includes a section titled: "Inventory of the goods left by Signore Cavaliere Father Giovanni Caccialupi in the home of Signore Carl'Antonio when he went to the religion of Saint Paul".⁷⁷¹ This list describes, among other possessions, Giovanni's armour for the chest and back, "eight pikes with blades and shafts and three walnut racks for the said pikes" and "a large painted portrait framed in walnut".⁷⁷² Similar to the arms and armour present in the Caccialupi home in 1588, these items perhaps memorialised an absent family member, commemorating Giovanni's accomplishments and the honour he had brought the lineage.

The presence of Giovanni's arms and armour in the Caccialupi home and the achievements that they may have referred to is especially notable because of the

⁷⁶⁶ Alidosi, 14.

⁷⁶⁷ Emanuel Buttigieg, *Nobility, Faith and Masculinity: The Hospitaller Knights of Malta, c.1580-c.1700* (London: Continuum, 2011), 29 and 42.

⁷⁶⁸ Buttigieg, *Nobility*, 38.

⁷⁶⁹ Buttigieg, *Nobility*, 42.

⁷⁷⁰ Alidosi, 14.

⁷⁷¹ Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 18^v.

⁷⁷² "Un petto[;] una schiena"; "no otto piche con feore et aste e 3 rastelli di noce per d^o", Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 18^v and 19^r.

apparent absence of arms and armour belonging to his elder brother. Although in 1617 Carl'Antonio was in possession of “four round war bucklers”, a number of firearms and a cross-bow,⁷⁷³ little seems to have remained of the arms and armour listed in the inventory that followed his father's death in 1588. In particular, the items most commonly associated with patrician status, such as swords, daggers and pole-arms, are all absent from the 1617 inventory, as are the 21 pikes, spears, ceremonial halberd and body armour discussed above.

While it is impossible to know what happened to these items over the period between the two inventories, it is interesting to consider their absence in light of Carl'Antonio's shortcomings in his role as the Caccialupi patriarch. He does not appear to have played a significant part in the governance of the city, unlike his forbearers, who were senators and Gonfalonieri del Popolo.⁷⁷⁴ He was also never knighted, unlike his father, grandfather and younger brother, nor was he a member of the prestigious confraternity of Santa Maria della Morte, as his father was.⁷⁷⁵ Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Carl'Antonio failed to produce an heir to the Caccialupi patrimony; and, as Thomas Kuehn explains, in this period, “[f]ailure to preserve family lines was tragic.”⁷⁷⁶ Although Carl'Antonio had a son and daughter, both were illegitimate,⁷⁷⁷ and it was his nephew, the son of his sister, Laura, who would inherit the Caccialupi patrimony in 1617.⁷⁷⁸

As young men, Carl'Antonio and Giovanni may have actually used the arms and armour listed in the inventory of 1588 in their military training, during tournaments or in civic processions. These items also announced and celebrated the honour and history of their lineage, offering images of exemplary figures, or references to them, for the young men to follow and achievements to strive for. Thus in 1588, the brothers' paths in life and the roles they were expected to play were relatively clear. As adults, arms and

⁷⁷³ The inventory lists, for instance: “Un archibuggio turchesco L12[;] Duoi pissoni da foco L6[;] Una balestra L1[...] quatro rotelle da Guerra L1”, Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 17^v.

⁷⁷⁴ 13 June 1466 Ludovico di Floriano Caccialupi was made a senator by Pope Paul II 13 June 1466. 9 October 1551 Floriano di Carl'Antonio entered the Senate; he was succeeded by Christofo Angelelli when he died 9 April 1558. Alidosi, 22.

⁷⁷⁵ *Matricola*, 33^r.

⁷⁷⁶ Thomas Kuehn, *Illegitimacy in Renaissance Florence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 167.

⁷⁷⁷ Floriano and Maddalena are both described as Carl'Antonio's natural children in the post-mortem inventory. Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 19^v.

⁷⁷⁸ Both the post-mortem inventory and Carl'Antonio's last testament explain the adoption of Giovanni Allamandini as the universal heir. Notaio Berni (Caccialupi), 20^v-21^v; Notaio Benazzi (Caccialupi), 42^v.

armour, or the absence of it, announced Carl'Antonio and Giovanni's shortcomings and successes in their respective roles.

Weapons, armour and portraits may have, in 1588, told Carl'Antonio and Giovanni Caccialupi about the achievements of their ancestors as well as indicated what they, too, should strive for, where they fit into the hierarchy of the family and lineage. In 1617, these kinds of objects may have functioned in a similar way for the next generation; however, at least for Carl'Antonio's illegitimate son, Floriano, the arms and armour discussed here marked and celebrated individuals' achievements and successes within a lineage where his position was uncertain. He was his father's only son, but not his heir; according to Carl'Antonio's will, Floriano was to be allowed to continue living in the Caccialupi home, but arrangements were also made in the likely event that the heirs "did not want him in the house".⁷⁷⁹ The arms and armour also represented two specific masculine identities that were unlikely if not impossible for Floriano: he could become neither the Caccialupi patriarch nor a Knight of Malta. In this light, perhaps for Floriano arms and armour were more akin to a mirror than a map,⁷⁸⁰ reflecting his ambiguous position within the household, lineage and society.

Arms and armour were necessary for battle, tournaments and civic processions as well as for referring to these events once they had ended. They indicated a family's contributions to the city, individuals' accomplishments and what was necessary for future generations to achieve. These objects thus both represented and shaped a family's social position within the city, but also the status of different members of the household.

6.2. *Lavori donneschi* and the Education of Girls in the Home⁷⁸¹

This section focuses on two types of *lavori donneschi*, or household activities, cooking and work with textiles, both closely related to gender and social class. Attending to domestic tasks was seen as a means of teaching girls and young women necessary skills, but also of keeping them busy and out of trouble; therefore, authors of conduct manuals advised even elite parents to have their daughters participate in housework.⁷⁸² As Giovanni Leonardi suggested, girls should "occupy themselves in a number of good and

⁷⁷⁹ "e caso che il suoi heredi non lo volessero in casa...", Notaio Benazzi (Caccialupi), 42^r.

⁷⁸⁰ Springer, 11.

⁷⁸¹ Parts of this section will be published in my essay, "The Material Culture of Female Youth in Bologna, 1550 – 1600," in *The Youth of Early Modern Women*, edited by Elizabeth S. Cohen & Margaret Reeves (University of Amsterdam Press, forthcoming February 2018).

⁷⁸² Ajmar-Wollheim, "Geography", 84 and, "Toys", 83-88.

virtuous exercises,” waking up early in the morning, praying to God, working, taking lessons and praying yet again.⁷⁸³ Ludovico Dolce offered similar advice, suggesting that girls learn: “how to adorn a chamber, make a bed, ensure that all the family’s goods are arranged with order and in their places,” as well as “how to cook and prepare food”. Although he concedes that noblewomen may “scoff and mock” at the thought of their daughters kept busy in the kitchen, Dolce argues that this way things would be done with more order, cleanliness and care and at the same time less expense.⁷⁸⁴

Dolce also offers advice on how to make learning domestic chores more fun for girls, namely by providing them with miniaturised versions of household tools in all sorts of materials. He explains that through these playthings, girls would “learn with delight” the name and purpose of implements they would use as adults.⁷⁸⁵ Although Dolce’s work is prescriptive, there is evidence that some Bolognese families possessed miniature household objects, perhaps to engage girls in play and learning. For example, the 1574 inventory of the goods in the home of the artisan Giovanni Matteo Fendenti, includes among kitchenware, “a very small children’s pot”.⁷⁸⁶ This object may have been similar to tiny jugs and pots found in museum collections today, such as those now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The jug in figure 6.3, for example, is only four centimetres tall and made of quite durable material, which would have made it suitable for small, clumsy hands.⁷⁸⁷ The “very small children’s pot” in the Fendenti household may have been given to a girl for use in imaginative play or in imitation of the actions she saw other female members of the household performing. As her

⁷⁸³ “Faccia impararla coll’altrui esempio à lievarsi la mattina à buon hora, à fare oratione, & à lodare Dio benedetto, & doppo l’oratione segue il lavoro, & al lavoro succeda anco la lettione & oratione un’altra volta: percioche così le parrà breve il tempo, occupandosi in varii essercitii virtuosi & buoni.” Leonardi, 159.

⁷⁸⁴ “...& vorrei appresso, che non solo questa fanciulla s’addestrasse nelle facende particolari della casa (che molte ne sono) sì come adornare una camera, acconciare un letto, far che tutte le masseritie famigliari siano divise con ordine & a luoghi loro, in modo, che paia, che tutta la casa da ogni parte goda, & sia piena d’allegria: ma etiandio della cucina, imparando il modo di cucinare & di ordinar le vivande: le quali vorrei, che per la maggior parte fossero curate et amministrate da lei percioche ci sono sempre più grati quei cibi, che vengono dalle mani delle nostre o sirocchie, o mogli, o figliuole, che habbiano, che non sono quegli altri che vengono dalle fanti. Ben so io, che alcune delicate Madonne si faranno beffe & mi scherniranno (se questi ragionamenti pervenissero alle orecchie loro) ch’io voglia occupar nella cura della cucina le loro figliuole, ma quelle solamente, che stiamano più bella loda, che le figliuole imparino, come si componano i belletti, che questa parte non solo commoda, ma necessaria in ciascuna casa; perchioche il tutto si fa sempre con più ordine, con maggior nettezza, & con minore spesa, & etiandio con più cura, essendo diviso & apprestato o dalla madre della famiglia, o dalla figliuola.” Dolce, *Dialogo*, 14^v-15^r. On housework more generally, see Ajmar-Wollheim, “Housework”, 152–63.

⁷⁸⁵ Dolce, 10^r-11^v. Also see Ajmar, “Toys”, 88.

⁷⁸⁶ ASB, *Notarile*, Aristotele Sigurani, 7/20 e 6/1 (1571-1599), 23 October 1574 (Giovanni Fendenti) (no pagination), 44^v-45^r; 45^r.

⁷⁸⁷ This item was recovered from a Jewish cemetery in Damascus, but made in Pesaro c. 1520-40. Ajmar, “Toys”, 87-89.

knowledge grew, perhaps the tiny pot was replaced with larger, more functional items to help a girl develop greater skill, such as the “old, medium-sized pot”, also found in the Fendenti household.⁷⁸⁸

When a girl had grown into a young woman and was ready for marriage, she might be given her own tools for cooking and cleaning. For example, Elisabetta Pino, from an artisan family, had in her trousseau a pot, kettle, brazier, pan, bed warmer and other items needed to help her run a household when she married Pompilio Benamati, a locksmith, in 1598.⁷⁸⁹ These were practical tools suited to the domestic tasks expected of an artisan's spouse; they also represented the knowledge and skill that Elisabetta had developed and her readiness to apply these as a wife. In contrast, young women from wealthy Bolognese families did not usually have tools for cooking or cleaning in their trousseaux. They and their mothers might have “scoffed” at the idea of working in the kitchen, as Dolce suggested. Instead, elite young women learned to oversee and manage this kind of labour, which, in their homes was typically performed by servants and slaves.⁷⁹⁰

Social class also shaped the ways in which girls and young women participated in various forms of domestic textile work, including weaving, spinning, and sewing. Many moralists criticised noblewomen's apparent distaste for these activities. For instance as Antoniano explained, rather than “distain for the needle and spindle... [young women should] rejoice at dressing with their own hands, their fathers and brothers”.⁷⁹¹ Even if they did not rejoice at the prospect, elite young women were certainly witness to, if not working at, these tasks. The inventories considered here show that many Bolognese households featured tools for working with textiles. Notable are looms and equipment for weaving present in households where the patriarchs were not employed as weavers, tailors or merchants of silk or wool. When practiced as a principal craft, and so by men, the production of textiles took place in a workshop rather than within living space. Therefore, the presence of equipment such as looms in kitchens, bedchambers and other domestic spaces suggests that in these instances weaving was performed by female members of the household.⁷⁹² For instance, the residence of Maestro Simone Tamburini featured both a loom and a warper for silk,

⁷⁸⁸ “una caldarina piccola da putti”, Notaio Sigurani (Fendenti), 45^r.

⁷⁸⁹ Notaio Zanettini (Dos D. Elisabetta di Pinu).

⁷⁹⁰ Raffaella Sarti, *Europe at Home: Family and Material Culture, 1500-1800* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2004), 160.

⁷⁹¹ Antoniano, 165a.

⁷⁹² Ajmar-Wollheim, “Housework”, 157 and Brown, “A Woman's Place”, 206–24.

with which his daughters, Cassandra and Domicella, may have learned to weave.⁷⁹³ Similarly, Alberto Zanolini had in his home “two looms for silk made of poplar” and “a pair of warpers for canvas, [both] old and made of wood”.⁷⁹⁴ Zanolini’s daughters perhaps oversaw the production of cloth by servants or learned to weave themselves using this equipment. Finally, when Count Filippo Manzoli died in 1560, he had in his *palazzo*, “a loom, a warper [and] two pairs of combs for hemp”.⁷⁹⁵ Manzoli’s daughter, whose name is lost today, probably did not weave fabric herself, but may have learned to oversee the production of textiles by other women.⁷⁹⁶ She and other young women from elite families were more likely to have been taught to work with a needle and thread than a loom,⁷⁹⁷ as is discussed below.

If social class determined how a young woman might participate in domestic textile production, it seems to have had little bearing on how the skills necessary for this kind of work were learned, similar to learning to read as was discussed in Chapter 5. There is evidence of children working to produce textiles, but there do not seem to have been tools for spinning thread, weaving cloth or sewing made specifically for child-sized hands.⁷⁹⁸ Although inventories list many spindles, looms, lengths of fabric, spools of thread, and sewing baskets, these are rarely described as being specifically for use by girls or young women, unlike the miniature children’s pot discussed above.⁷⁹⁹ This suggests that girls learned to spin thread, weave textiles, and embroider silk using the same tools as their mothers, sisters or other female members of the household. And, as seems natural, images of women’s textile work imply that skills and knowledge were shared from one generation to the next. The title page to Nicolò Zoppino’s book of embroidery patterns, *Convivio delle Belle Donne*, dated to 1531, for instance, shows a group of females in a range of ages at work with textiles, one woman with an infant in

⁷⁹³ Notaio Zanettini (Tamburini).

⁷⁹⁴ “Due para de Tellari da seda de fioppa novi” and “uno par de ordidori da tella de legno vecchii”, Notaio Zanettini (Tamburini).

⁷⁹⁵ “Un paro de tellari[,] Un ordiduro[,] Dui para de pettini da tela”, Notaio Nobili (Manzoli).

⁷⁹⁶ All that is known about Manzoli’s daughter is that she was married to Count Lamberto Malatesta of Romagna. Crescenzi, 529.

⁷⁹⁷ Ajmar-Wollheim, “Housework”, 157-58.

⁷⁹⁸ For example see Ciammitti, 475-81 and Hufton, 66-73. There is evidence for child-sized tools in later periods. Mary Carolyn Beaudry, *Findings: The Material Culture of Needlework and Sewing* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2006), 112.

⁷⁹⁹ One exception is “a wicker basket with different works for the girls” (“una panirola di brillo con diversi lavori per le putte”), found in the home of the Bolognese printer, Domenico Tibaldi in 1583. “The girls” are presumably his daughters, Caterina and Artemisia, though their ages at this time are unknown. Gualandi, 34.

her arms (fig. 6.4).⁸⁰⁰ Additionally, Ludovico Carracci's drawing of women in an interior shows a female figure in the foreground sewing while another holding an infant looks on (fig. 6.5). An early-seventeenth-century painting from a Florentine workshop, now in the Museo Davia Bargellini in Bologna, shows five female figures involved in spinning and weaving (fig. 6.6), with a young girl standing in the background. Perhaps most interesting, is a painting of Saint Anne teaching the Virgin to sew (c. 1590-1600) attributed to Spadarino (fig. 6.7). Here, the youthful Virgin works diligently on a piece of needlework under her mother's watchful eye.

Girls perhaps began to learn these kinds of skills as somewhat passive observers of spinning, weaving, and sewing and, when they were better able to handle tools, moved on to more active, hands-on learning. When a young woman became more proficient in weaving or sewing, she might be given her own equipment, particularly when she married and left her family home for that of her husband.⁸⁰¹ For example, when Caterina Tomiati, the daughter of a smith, married Maestro Giovanni Giacomo Brigadelli in 1589, she had in her trousseau a loom and other equipment for silk weaving.⁸⁰² Caterina likely learned this craft before her marriage, and her output would have been sold to supplement her husband's income.⁸⁰³

Caterina also brought a sewing cushion to her marital home, and items related to sewing were more often included in Bolognese brides' trousseaux than equipment for spinning and weaving.⁸⁰⁴ For example, when she was married in 1594, Camilla Zucchini, a painter's daughter, possessed three sewing baskets along with various sorts of thread.⁸⁰⁵ Brides from elite families, too, had tools for sewing and needlework, which were often of expensive materials. Like Camilla, the Bolognese noblewoman, Artemisia Caprara also had three sewing baskets in her trousseau; however the materials of which her tools were made were much more costly than those belonging to the painter's daughter. Artemisia's sewing baskets contained, for example, sewing cushions of satin and damask trimmed with gold, a silver thimble, knives, shears, and tools for making

⁸⁰⁰ Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 213-14.

⁸⁰¹ This was also the case in Florence (Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 180-89).

⁸⁰² ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), 19 September 1589 (Dos d Catterina d Thomiatis) (no pagination).

⁸⁰³ Brown, "A Woman's Place", 215.

⁸⁰⁴ Notaio Zanettini (Thomiatis). This seems to have also been true in Florence (Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, and Family*, 185).

⁸⁰⁵ ASB, *Notarile* Pietro Zanettini, 6/2 (1555-1605), 15 January 1594 (Dos D Cammile Zochinis) (no pagination).

cord.⁸⁰⁶ The inventory of the trousseau belonging to Margherita de'Serli, who married into a lesser branch of the prominent Gozzadini family in 1587, also lists silk and damask sewing cushions, as well as two pairs of shears, a silver thimble, over 200 *braccia* (128 metres) of fabric for sewing undershirts, handkerchiefs and other items.⁸⁰⁷

The objects in Artemesia and Margherita's sewing baskets cannot be linked to extant artefacts, but may have been similar to examples of cases for knives and thimbles, shears and thimbles in museum collections today. For instance, the sixteenth-century Venetian knife-case in figure 6.8 is decorated with pearls as well as embroidery in silk and gold thread (fig. 6.9), with a *fede* symbol, two hands clasping, at the top (fig. 6.10). This suggests it was related to marriage and perhaps included in a wealthy Venetian bride's trousseau, similar to the knives for sewing that Artemesia brought to her marriage. Examples of shears may also be similar to those owned by the two elite Bolognese brides, such as the set in the Victoria and Albert Museum, pictured in figure 6.11.⁸⁰⁸ The shears and matching case are inlaid with mother of pearl and incised with geometric patterns and are perhaps more ornate than those in the Bolognese trousseaux, but offers a sense of the richness with which these tools might be decorated. Finally, a silver thimble in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is perhaps similar to those owned by Artemesia and Margherita (fig. 6.12). Although this is a German example, thimbles were commonly imported into Italy and silver was a desirable option, as it did not tarnish fabrics or skin as other materials did.⁸⁰⁹ Silver was also much more expensive than brass, displaying the status and wealth of the thimble's owner, but it was also quite weak and easily pierced with a needle, and therefore somewhat impractical.⁸¹⁰ Thus, perhaps the costly sewing tools in elite brides' trousseaux pointed to their social status, rather than to their ability to perform manual labour, as in the case of some items that artisan women brought to their marital homes.

Regardless of the materials that sewing tools were made from, their inclusion in brides' trousseaux suggests that most young women would have been proficient with needle and thread by the time they married.⁸¹¹ As girls gained skill and knowledge, these tools did not necessarily change, yet the quality of their handiwork surely did, and

⁸⁰⁶ *Archivio Caprara*.

⁸⁰⁷ Notaio Passarotti (Margherita), 227^{r-v}.

⁸⁰⁸ On shears and needle cases in Florentine trousseaux, see Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, Family*, 187.

⁸⁰⁹ Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, Family*, 186.

⁸¹⁰ Musacchio, *Art, Marriage, Family*, 186.

⁸¹¹ Ajmar-Wollheim, "Housework", 162; Beaudry, 155; and Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (London: Women's Press, 1984), 73.

likewise the purposes of their output. Girls often created samplers of different kinds of stitches and designs as the culmination of learning to make lace, embroider or other kinds of needlework.⁸¹² For instance, the sampler made by Giulia Piccolomini in the early-seventeenth century shows her ability to work in many different stitches and patterns, including letters, floral designs and cut-work (fig. 4.29). As they got older and closer to marriageable age, young women might use the stitches and techniques they had learned to make and embellish textiles for their trousseaux.⁸¹³ From wealthy families, Artemisia Caprara and Margherita de'Serli, both had numerous pieces of embroidered clothing and accessories, including undergarments, sleeves, head coverings, and handkerchiefs. Although professional embroiderers likely did much of this work, the sewing tools in their trousseaux suggest that they themselves were capable with needle and thread.⁸¹⁴ Brides from more humble families also had textiles featuring needlework, which they were more likely to have produced with their own hands.⁸¹⁵ For instance, Camilla Zucchini, the painter's daughter, had two pairs of embroidered pillowcases in her trousseau, one of which was "not yet formed"; perhaps she would finish this project after she was married.⁸¹⁶

Young women's ability to make and personalise items for their trousseaux may have indicated their potential to contribute to the economy of their marital homes, making them more desirable as wives.⁸¹⁷ This is suggested by the final illustration in Nicolò Zoppino's embroidery pattern book from 1529, reproduced in figure 6.13. The image shows Saint Nicolas handing three balls to a young woman, a reference to his providing dowries to three poor but deserving maidens. Aligning himself with Saint Nicolas dowering young women with gold, Zoppino, through his pattern book, was helping to dower young women with needlework skills. These skills not only made them more attractive as potential wives, but could also be put to use by young women in order to earn money for a dowry.⁸¹⁸ For instance, orphans between the ages of ten and twelve living in the Bolognese conservatory of Santa Maria del Baraccano were set to

⁸¹² Parker, 88.

⁸¹³ Ajmar-Wollheim, "Housework", 158 and Parker, 87.

⁸¹⁴ Carole Collier Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families, Fortunes, & Fine Clothing* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 118.

⁸¹⁵ Parker, 70.

⁸¹⁶ "uno paro d endime nove tutte di maglia lavorate" and "uno altro paro d'endime di rensa con la maglia lavorate nove non ancora formite", Notaio Zanettini (Zochinis).

⁸¹⁷ Ciammitti, 492; Frick, 43; Giovanni Ricci, "Donzelle in pericolo e fanciulli in salamoia. Una immagine indisciplinata e la sua normalizzazione," *Annali dell'istituto storico-italico-germanico in Trento* 8 (1982): 373–408, 373–408; Rocco, "Maniera Devota", 85.

⁸¹⁸ On the importance of these skills for orphans, see Ciammitti, 477.

work weaving and embroidering textiles.⁸¹⁹ This kept the young women busy and out of trouble, but also enabled them to earn a small amount of money for a dowry so they could eventually marry.⁸²⁰ Demonstrating these skills through their work for the conservatory also made them more likely to attract a husband. As Luisa Ciammitti has shown, men looking to marry one of the orphaned girls were often concerned about their ability to sew or weave, but not to read or write.⁸²¹

Once married, the focus of women's work with textiles might change yet again, to making or decorating items for their children or other family members. The inventory of Count Filippo Manzoli's *palazzo*, for instance, lists four swaddling bands embroidered with gold and silk; perhaps these were similar to extant examples of sixteenth-century swaddling bands and baptismal layettes embroidered with crosses and the letters of the Christogram, which were intended to give infants much needed protection, discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 and pictured in figure 2.30.⁸²² As the sampler in figure 4.29 demonstrates, women learned from a young age to create crosses, the name of Christ and other religious imagery with needle and thread, which could be applied to domestic goods. The decoration of clothing and textiles for infants and children could also be of a more personal nature. Sabadino degli Arienti, for example, describes Giovanna Bentivoglio, the daughter of Giovanni I, the early-fifteenth century *signore* of Bologna, as having embroidered "fiori de margarite", or daisies, on a dress for her firstborn daughter, Margherita.⁸²³

Women like Giovanna, who were able to embroider and do other sorts of needlework for pleasure or to give as gifts rather than to earn money, were also able to make decisions about the pieces they produced. Choosing the patterns, colours, type of stitch and so on perhaps gave women a sense of agency and control, at least with respect to this part of their lives.⁸²⁴ Women and girls that worked at embroidery, weaving or spinning as a source of income, though, were in quite a different position. As with the orphaned girls at the Baraccano, they might work long hours, have no choice about what they created and saw little financial return for what they produced.⁸²⁵ What could

⁸¹⁹ Ciammitti, 475-81 and Rocco, "Maniera Devota", 80.

⁸²⁰ Marina Carmignani, *Tessuti, ricami e merletti in Italia: dal Rinascimento al liberty* (Milan: Electa, 2005), 166; Ciammitti, 492; and Rocco, "Maniera Devota", 79.

⁸²¹ Ciammitti, 487-88.

⁸²² Knight, 122-124; Musacchio, *Art and Ritual*, 39 & 49.

⁸²³ Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, *Gynevera, de le clare donne*, edited by Corrado Ricci and A. Bacchi della Lega (Bologna, 1888), 116-117. See also Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba*, 237.

⁸²⁴ Ajmar, "Women as Exemplars", 205-6.

⁸²⁵ Ciammitti, 477.

be a pleasant and fulfilling pastime for some was arduous work for others lower down the social scale. Thus, social status not only determined what kinds of skills girls and young women needed to learn and perform, but also the purposes for those skills.

Conclusion

Early modern Bolognese homes featured a variety of objects that helped children and young people to learn and hone the skills they would need later as adults, depending on their gender and social status. Girls from artisan families might learn to cook and weave, whereas those from the upper classes learned to oversee this kind of domestic labour and to embroider with silk and gold. Boys and young men from patrician families might spend time away from home, learning to fight and comport themselves with grace and elegance to bring honour to the city and their families; skills unnecessary to those from more humble backgrounds. Finally, although objects like miniature pots, needles, swords and armour might be tools necessary for teaching children particular skills, they were also a means of teaching them their place in the social hierarchy of the city and the family.

Conclusion

Drawing on a broad range of sources including artefacts, images, early modern treatises and archival documents, this thesis has demonstrated the important role material culture played in shaping children's domestic experiences, religious practices, education and identity-formation. Families employed various objects to attend to children's health, spiritual wellbeing and the development of necessary life skills; however, wealth and social class were significant factors in determining what kinds of objects a family might possess and the spaces in which they were used, displayed and stored. Thus, the material culture of the home could both convey and reinforce aspects of familial and individual identities, helping children to understand their place in the hierarchy of the household, lineage and city more broadly.

The study of children and childhood through the lens of material culture offers a fresh perspective on the early stages of life, adding further dimension and complexity to what we know through studies of orphanages, foundling hospitals, schools and youth confraternities.⁸²⁶ Focusing on Bologna, a city in which the domestic interior has been understudied in comparison with other northern Italian cities helps to build up a comparative framework of the spaces, objects and images that made up the early modern home.⁸²⁷ Furthermore, the study of Bolognese domestic life contributes to our understanding of the social and cultural history of a city that has more often been the focus of studies on topics such as university life, confraternities and seventeenth-century artistic patronage, for example.⁸²⁸

Much of this thesis is based on evidence pertaining to wealthy and elite families; however, it has also considered the homes of the less affluent to try and paint a more robust picture of domestic life, or lives, in this period. The scope of this project has also been thematically broad, taking into consideration how families cared for children's health and spiritual wellbeing, religious education and practices, literacy and the learning of other kinds of necessary skills. This demonstrates not only the significant role of domestic material culture in rearing and educating children, but also the many and varied relationships and interactions that children had with spaces, objects and images within the home. In addition to serving quite practical functions, domestic objects and inhabitants' interactions with them also encouraged, facilitated and even

⁸²⁶ See for instance, Terpstra, *Abandoned Children*, 21-31.

⁸²⁷ Judith C. Brown, "Introduction," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis (London: Longman, 1998), 1-15; 5.

⁸²⁸ See for instance see, Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities*.

demanded particular behaviours, beliefs and actions that were deeply intertwined with social class, gender, religion and other aspects of identity. This, in turn, shaped the ways in which identities were formed, developed and shifted even from the first days of life.

The broad scope of this project also means that many topics have been raised that cannot be explored in the depth they deserve here, though this offers several opportunities for later research. For example, the archival documents that allow us to peer into artisan households have suggested that, unlike some other cities, it seems to have been relatively common for masters to have their workshops in the same structure as their homes.⁸²⁹ This has consequences not only for our understanding of public versus private and professional versus domestic space in this period, but also for working practices, the construction of gender, ideas about family life and childrearing in non-elite homes that deserves further investigation.

Another subject broached in this thesis that offers an avenue for research is women and girls' work with textiles in the home. This was an activity that took place in the homes of artisans, notaries and patricians and was a significant component of domestic education and training, however, we know little about it in the Bolognese context, despite the importance of the silk industry in the city. This line of investigation offers an opportunity to better understand activities such as spinning, weaving, sewing and embroidery, on their own but also in relation to the construction of feminine identities in this period. Additionally, it is a means by which we may find evidence of female experiences and agency not otherwise visible, as scholars have done for the English context.⁸³⁰ The consideration of this kind of domestic work, particularly early modern lace-making, is also important as it was a precursor to the Aemilia Ars movement, which started in Bologna in 1898 as a response to Arts and Crafts and William Morris (1834-96).⁸³¹ For instance, the Bolognese lace-maker Bartolomeo Danieli published a number of manuals in the early-seventeenth century that were highly influential on lace production throughout the early modern period, however there is little modern scholarship on his work.⁸³²

⁸²⁹ Cavallo, "Artisan's *casa*", 70.

⁸³⁰ Parker, 12.

⁸³¹ See for instance, Carla Bernardini, Doretta Davanzo Poli, and Orsola Ghetti Baldi, *Aemilia Ars: 1898-1903: Arts & crafts a Bologna* (Milan: A+G, 2001) and Carla Bernardini and Marta Forlai, *Industriartistica bolognese: Aemilia Ars, luoghi, materiali, fonti* (Cinisello Balsamo (Milan): Silvana, 2003).

⁸³² Femke Speelberg, "Fashion & Virtue: Textile Patterns and the Print Revolution, 1520–1620," special issue of *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (Fall 2015), 39.

This project has also raised subjects that are in need of further research outside of the domestic sphere. For instance, as was discussed in Chapter 6, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Bologna was home to several schools of swordsmanship, the masters of which also produced a number of manuals and treatises. Despite the importance of these masters, schools and texts on the development of fencing techniques and culture, they have received almost no scholarly consideration since the early-twentieth century.⁸³³ In addition, these schools were a source of honour for the city and its youth, and learning to bear arms was an important part of education and the construction of masculine identities in this period that needs further investigation.⁸³⁴

Although swordplay and needlework appear to be disparate, gender-specific activities, there are striking parallels between them. Men worked with needles as tailors, embroiderers and bookbinders, and poetry, literature, hagiography and the visual arts present sword-wielding amazons, saints and exemplary female figures. Real women living in this period also produced scenes of knights, ladies and mythical beasts using needles and thread. My proposed future research includes a post-doctoral project that will interrogate the relationship between the sword and the needle to further explore the construction and performance of gendered identities in early modern Bologna.

This project and the thesis upon which it is based are important for understanding ideas about gender and the formation of identities in the past, but also have implications for the present day. Understanding how domestic spaces and material culture contributed to constructions and performances of gender in the past can help us to understand and rethink the ways that we perceive gender and gendered roles today. Although this thesis is only a starting point for the study of children and childhood in the domestic context, this research has provided insight into the ways that culture was learned and transmitted in the early modern period.⁸³⁵ This knowledge contributes to broader historical questions concerning issues such as age, gender, and identity,⁸³⁶ and ultimately, suggests a means of understanding not only the agency objects had in the past, but also the agency of objects and images we encounter today, and how these encounters shape our daily lives.

⁸³³ See for instance, Castle, 34-52.

⁸³⁴ See section 6.1 of this thesis.

⁸³⁵ Daniel Miller, *Stuff* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 135.

⁸³⁶ Jane Eva Baxter, "The Archaeology of Childhood," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 37 (January 1, 2008): 159-75; 172.

APPENDIX 1

Contents of one of four “beautiful walnut chests” in the home of Count Filippo Manzoli in 1560.

ASB, *Notarile*, Francesco Nobili, 6/1 (1558-1560), f. 144, 3 February 1560 (Co Filippo Manzoli) (no pagination).

The contents of the chest with the swaddling bands are:

Quattro camise lavorate d'oro d 'argento et di seda cremesina da donna

Quattro fasce da putti lavorate d'oro et di seda

Un libricciolino recamato d'oro

Due para d'endime un lavorato d'oro et l'altro di seda cremesina

Sei chioppe de fazzoletti lavorti di seda cremesina d'oro et di seda agiura

Quattro pettenaduri lavorati di sede cremesina verde, et agiurra

Una panirola con tri copetti lavorati d'oro et d'argento, et sei altri di velance de piu sorte

Tri altri copetti lavorati di seda cremesina aguiura et ranrata

Otto panicelli sbusati, et un copetto sbusato

Una bretta di drappo cremesino con le rosette d oro intorno

Un libricciolo della m^a grande

Una manizza di veluto negro fodrada di pele

Un altra bretta di veluto negro et due di velo

Un capello d armcino

Una tazza d'argento sopra dorato con la cassetta

APPENDIX 2

Framed pictures in the household of Ludovico Caccialupi after his death in 1588

ASB, *Notarile*, Tommaso Passarotti, 6/1 (1586-1587), 13 February 1588 (Lodovico Caccialupi), 347^v-365^r; 353^v-354^r.

Quadri cormiciati:

Due ritratti del sig^r floriano vecchio, uno corniciato di legno, l'altro co le corici dorate

Il Ritratto del sign^r cav^{re} floriano corniciato di noce,

Il ritratto del sig^{re} Cavalier lud^{co} solo abbozzato et scorniciato

Il ritratto del cardinal d'Augusta

Tre quadri grandi a olio fatti a paesi corniciati di pero et finiti in ebano et dorati in salanova

Un quadro picciolo d'un paese a olio corniciato di pero attinto in negro

Un quadro a olio con una Giuditta corniciato di noce

Due quadri piccoli a guazzo corniciati di noce

Un quadro co un salvatore

Tre altri quadri di paesi corniciati di noce

Un crocifisso fatto sul raso negro corniciato di pero, et tinto in negro

Un crocifisso sul raso giallo corniciato di noce

Una Madonna il simile

Un crucifisso a olio scorniciato et vecchio

Una madona olio in assa fatta per man del sig^r floriano suo fig^{lo}

Una pieta grande antica con le cornicci dorate

Un crocifisso d'avorio su la croce d'ebano

Sei quadri vecchii di pittura corniciati di piu sorte d li storie

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Tommaso Passarotti (1552-1592), 6/1, 1586-1587 and 1587-1588.

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